Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience.

BACK TO GODHEAD

The Magazine of the Hare Krishna Movement • Mar/Apr 2010 • $4.50

TEMPLE ON A HILL

Hare Kṛṣṇas in the Heart of Mormon Country

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Back to Godh

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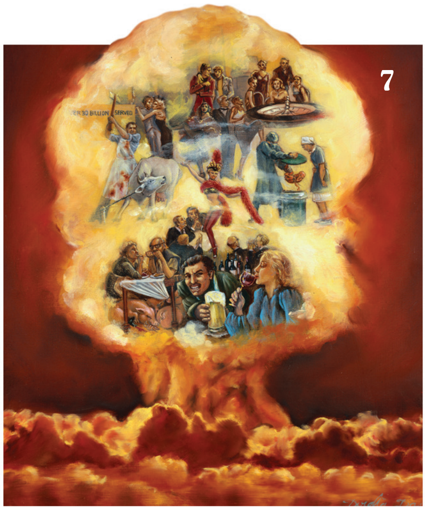
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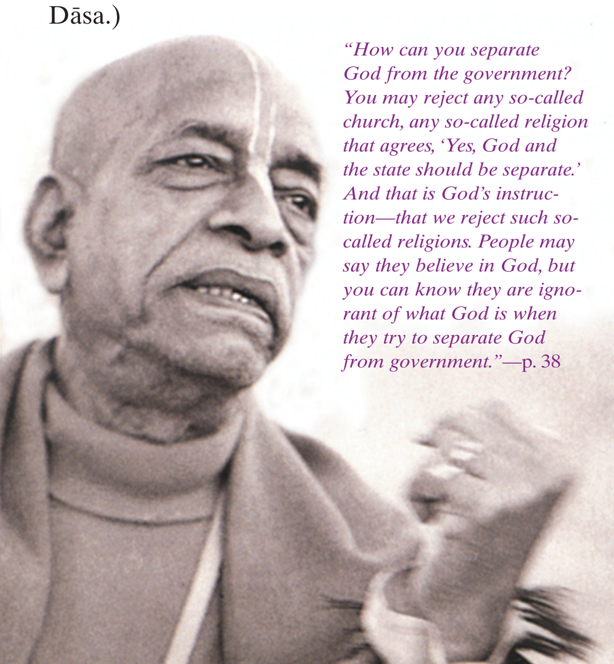
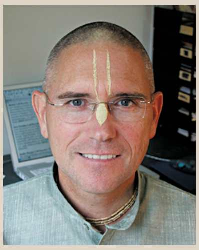
COVER A community-service group from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormons) drove fifty miles from Salt Lake City one Saturday to work at major projects on the grounds of the Hare Kṛṣṇa temple in Spanish Fork, Utah. Please see the story of the temple beginning on page 44. (Photo by Cāru Dāsa.)



"How can you separate God from the government? You may reject any so-called church, any so-called religion that agrees, 'Yes, God and the state should be separate.' And that is God's instruction—that we reject such so-called religions. People may say they believe in God, but you can know they are ignorant of what God is when they try to separate God from government."—p. 38

WELCOME



LORD KṚṢṆA'S first lesson to Ajruna in the *Bhagavad-gītā* is "You're not the body; you're an eternal spiritual being." When Arjuna hears this, he wonders, "Does that mean I need to give up everything and go off somewhere to meditate?" It's a natural question.

Arjuna asks Kṛṣṇa for guidance. Kṛṣṇa tells him that he should keep working but spiritualize his occupation by connecting it to Him. Kṛṣṇa repeats this point throughout the *Gītā,* making it one of the book's central lessons.

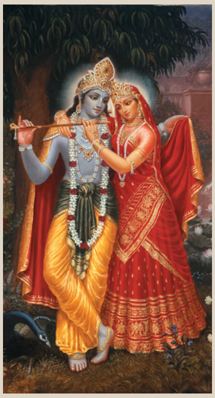
In this issue, three articles deal with the subject of work and Kṛṣṇa consciousness: "Hold On!" "Kṛṣṇa's Economics: 1 – 1 = 1," and "All Work and No Pray Makes Our Lives Wasted." These articles contain valuable insights into how to keep Kṛṣṇa at the center of our lives as we go to work each day.

In this issue you'll also hear about a devotee couple who decided on a different course for their lives. Inspired by Śrīla Prabhupāda's vision and instructions, they rejected entering the workforce and instead dedicated themselves fully to spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness. They relied on Kṛṣṇa for their maintenance, and He provided. A gorgeous temple in Utah stands as a testament to their devotion and Kṛṣṇa's blessings.

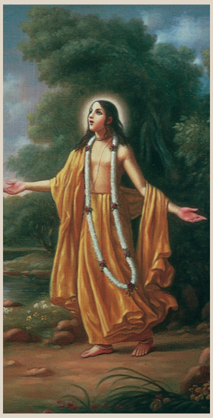
Hare Kṛṣṇa.—*Nāgarāja Dāsa, Editor*

OUR PURPOSES

- To help all people discern reality from illusion, spirit from matter, the eternal from the temporary.
- To expose the faults of materialism.
- To offer guidance in the Vedic techniques of spiritual life.
- To preserve and spread the Vedic culture.
- To celebrate the chanting of the holy names of God as taught by Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.
- To help every living being remember and serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead.



Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa are together the one Supreme Absolute Truth.



Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the combined incarnation of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, inaugurated the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa five hundred years ago.

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

BACK TO GODHEAD

The Magazine of the
Hare Krishna Movement

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Letters

Practicing/Sharing Kṛṣṇa Consciousness at Work

I thoroughly enjoyed reading articles from the Nov/Dec 2009 (Special) issue of *Back to Godhead.* Because the articles were clear, concise and convincing to me, I have been encouraged to share the special issue with friends and colleagues. I look forward to conversations with them that surely will be generated in the future.

While sharing these articles with my coworkers from other faiths, I decided to share only specific articles depending on the person. Based on my experience, it is much more effective to share specific articles that may fit their level of consciousness or personality. My objective has been to start and maintain spiritual conversations with them.

Following instructions from scriptures has been beneficial for my conduct at work. It provides me greater strength to focus on my work amid workplace dualities—salary raise or not, supervisory position or a worker, exciting project or routine work. It encourages me to network with people of faith, which reduces my association with coworkers who might be inclined to gossip, politics, or even illicit activities.

Damber Kumar Gurung
Fairfax, Virginia

One Unscientific Article

Thank you for the excellent collection of scholarly and authoritative articles in the November/December issue discussing evolutionary theory from the Vedic perspective. I love to share my BTG with friends and coworkers new to the philosophy, and the issue addressed Darwin's theories in a logical and thoughtful way, through scientific evidence as well as *śāstra* [scripture].

The only article I felt was out of place was the final article [by Ūrmilā Devī Dāsī], which told about the creation of the different bodies for living entities. I fear that article might have seemed quite unscientific compared with the rest of the issue. I have been a devotee since 1972, and had never read that account. There are many well-known passages from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that explain how the living entity comes into the material world. I would prefer to acquaint newcomers with the absolute truth of Kṛṣṇa consciousness through those descriptions. Thank you for your preaching work in service to Śrīla Prabhupāda and Lord Caitanya's movement.

Braja Baneśvarī Dāsī
Via the Internet

Ūrmilā Devī Dāsī replies: I'm glad you appreciated the issue on evolution. The account at the end, from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,* is indeed how *śāstra* describes the creation of each species. It is true that often in ISKCON we do not discuss these specific details, such as which demigoddess created which species. We often simply say that the various species are Brahmā's creations, or that the celestial *devas* create the species. It is true that this account is not scientific in the sense of something we can perceive and test. But the same can be said for evolutionary theory about the origin of species. Ancient history cannot be verified scientifically.

How the living entity comes into the material world is a separate topic from a discussion of how the demigods and demigoddesses create various species of bodies for the fallen living entities to inhabit. We dealt somewhat with the living entity coming to the material world in the article "Evolution of Consciousness."

Renewed Appreciation

I am reading both *The Science of Self-Realization* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,* First Canto, Part One, for the first time, and every single page amazes me. I use to read *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* regularly years ago, but I have just purchased it to start studying once again.

I am fifty-seven years old and finding myself drawn to Kṛṣṇa more every day. I chant all the way to work and home, and I think about Him and what all of His devotees are doing to bring all of us back to Him. I visit the Krishna.com website every day, and I appreciate what all of you do to keep it updated and all of us connected.

Steve Harvell
Via the Internet

False or Illusory?

In the book *The Quest for Enlightenment,* Śrīla Prabhupāda says that the concept of the material world as being an illusion is false. But in his purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.1.1, he says that the material world is a false one. Please clear up this apparent contradiction.

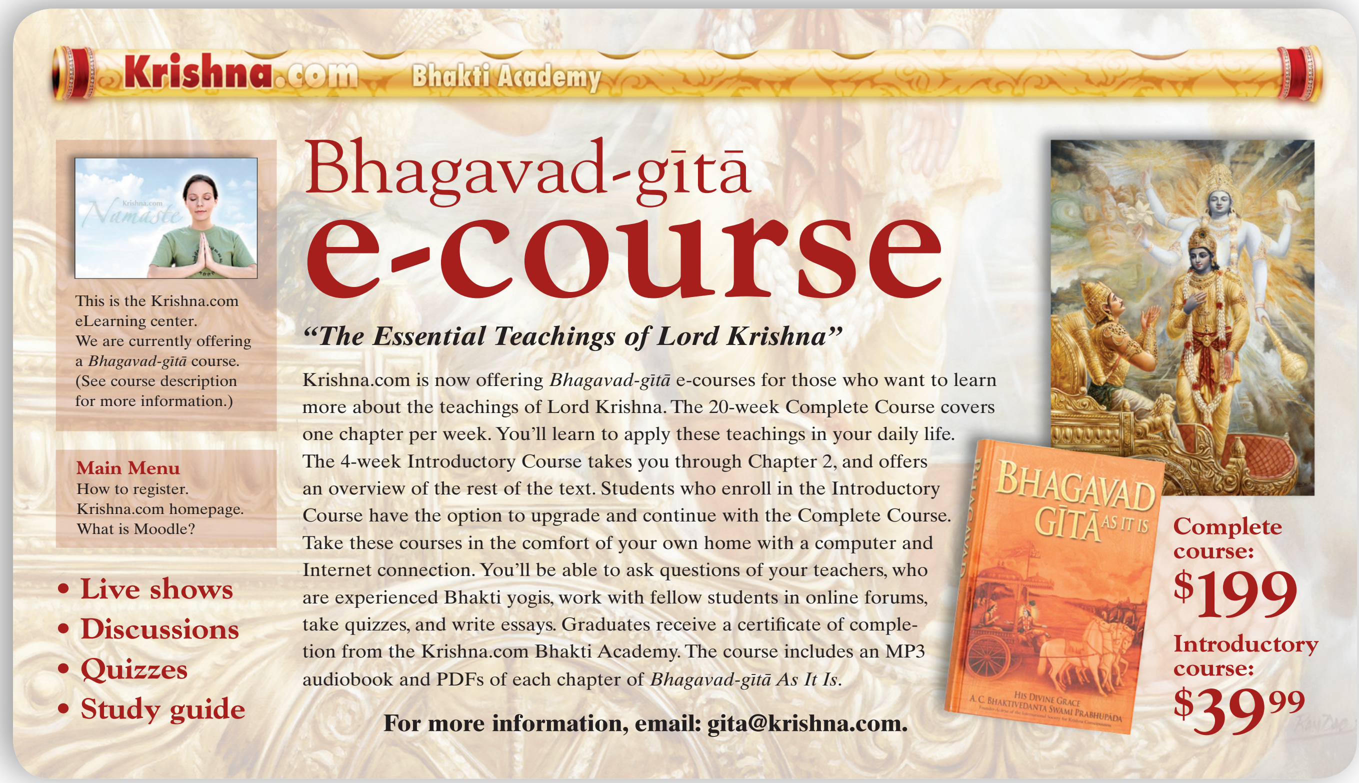
Anamika Thakur
Via the Internet

Our reply: Your paraphrasing of Śrīla Prabhupāda's words is not quite accurate. Śrīla Prabhupāda and all Vaiṣṇava philosophers say that the material world is illusory but not false.

There is a class of philosophers who claim that the material world is false, by which they mean that it does not actually exist at all. Due to our illusion, they say, we think the world is out there while in reality it is not there. But according to the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,* that is not so. And that is being refuted in *The Quest for Enlightenment.*

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.1.1, the world is not said to be false; it is said to be temporary. Anything temporary can also be said to be illusory because one moment it exists and the next moment it is not there. But the world as it is exists. Souls occupy that world. The world is the material energy of Kṛṣṇa, as explained in Chapter Seven of the *Bhagavad-gītā.* So it is real in the sense that it exists. It is wrong to think that it does not exist at all. But things here are temporary and changing, and so we term the material world *illusory.*

Replies were written by Krishna.com Live Help volunteers. Please write to us at: BTG, P. O. Box 430, Alachua, FL 32616, USA. Email: editors@krishna.com.



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For more information, email: gita@krishna.com.

This is the Krishna.com eLearning center. We are currently offering a *Bhagavad-gītā* course. (See course description for more information.)

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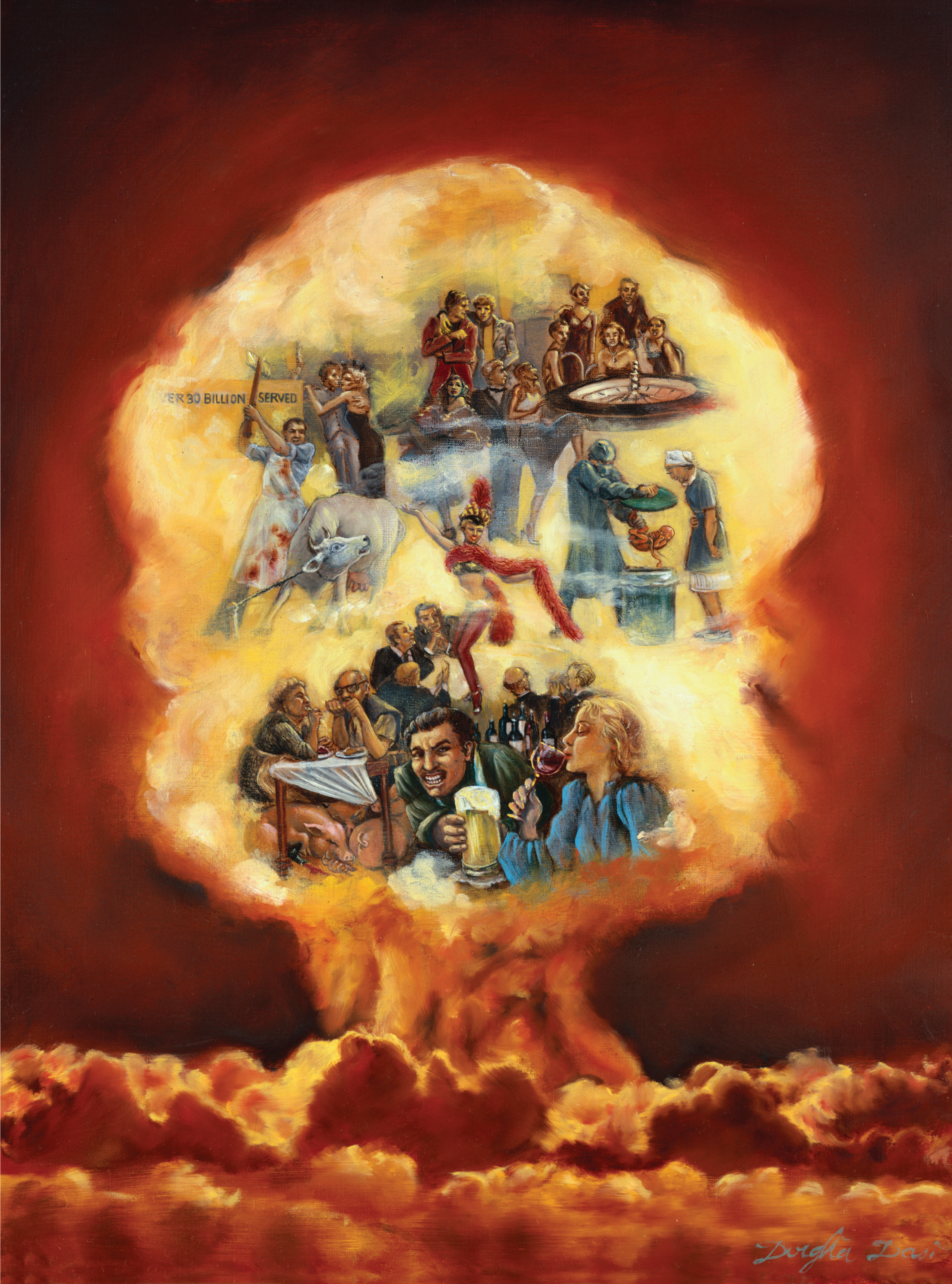

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FOUNDER’S LECTURE

Vrindavan, India—November 4, 1976

SOURCES OF SUFFERING

Because we are ignorant of the subtle laws of nature, our endeavors for happiness in this world often only add to our distress.

by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

Founder-*Ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

lokaḥ svayaṁ śreyasi naṣṭa-dṛṣṭir
yo ’rthān samīheta nikāma-kāmaḥ
anyonya-vairaḥ sukha-leśa-hetor
ananta-duḥkhaṁ ca na veda mūḍhaḥ

“Due to ignorance, the materialistic person does not know anything about his real self-interest, the auspicious path in life. He is simply bound to material enjoyment by lusty desires, and all his plans are made for this purpose. For temporary sense gratification, such a person creates a society of envy, and due to this mentality, he plunges into the ocean of suffering. Such a foolish person does not even know about this.”

—*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 5.5.16

THIS IS THE DESCRIPTION of the material world. *Anyonya-vairaḥ:* Everyone is simply envious of one another. This is the material world: I am envious of you; you are envious of me. You can extend this principle to family, society, community, and nation, but the basic principle is enviousness, nothing else.

A verse in the beginning of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.1.2) describes who is fit to accept the spiritual principles of the *Bhāgavatam: dharmaḥ projjhita-kaitavo ’tra paramo nirmatsarāṇām.* The *Bhāgavatam* is meant for persons who are no longer envious. Those who are envious have no entrance into the principles of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.*

The whole world is based on the principle of enviousness, *anyonya-vairaḥ.* And what is the result of this enviousness? *Sukha-leśa-hetu:* temporary happiness.

The nature of the material world is that so much fighting goes on between nation and nation, person and person, community and community. Despite so many legal codes, people fight with one another. The United Nations was created to stop fighting between nations. But what is the United Nations? I have already explained many times: It is an assembly of barking dogs. That’s all. “United” Nations—they will never unite. They will go there and bark. Many times we have seen nations show their enviousness there.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (5.29) Kṛṣṇa says *sarva-loka-maheśvaram:* “I am the proprietor of all planets.” But we are claiming, “This is my country,” “This is India, my country,” “This is my Pakistan,” “This is my America,” “This is my Russia”—and fighting. One group claims proprietorship

Under the force of subtle laws of nature, sinful activities such as meat-eating, illicit sex, intoxication, and gambling inevitably lead to misery.

Painting by Dīrghā Devī Dāsī

of some land, and another group says, "This is not yours. It is ours."

Despite the United Nations, such fighting still goes on. Why? *Ananta-duḥkhaṁ ca na veda mūḍhaḥ:* People create unlimited misery for themselves, but they do not know it. People are rascals. They claim rights to property and they fight.

They are forced to do it because they have been placed in the material world, which creates a condition of suffering. Lord Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.14) *daivī hy eṣā guṇa-mayī mama māyā duratyayā:* "This divine energy of Mine, consisting of the three modes of material nature, is difficult to overcome." I have given this example many times: In school the teacher engages two naughty boys to grab and pull each other's ears. Similarly, nature engages souls in the material world. People have manufactured *ugra-karma*—"horrible works"—for the annihilation of this world. Russia has the nuclear weapon, and the Americans too. They are looking for the opportunity to drop the bomb here and there, and everything will be destroyed. People do not know the aim of life. They engage in *ugra-karma* and create enmity.

A devotee can be satisfied in any condition of life, provided he can think of Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet.

In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (7.9.43) Prahlāda Mahārāja has said, *śoce tato vimukha-cetasaḥ:* "I am simply concerned for these rascals." As a Vaiṣṇava, a devotee of the Lord, Prahlāda Mahārāja has no problems. A devotee will be satisfied if he has the opportunity to read and recite *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* anywhere, in any part of the world, even sitting underneath a tree. One who has education can read *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.* But even if one has no education and cannot read, still he has no problem. He can chant: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. He can enjoy anywhere.

The Illiterate Brāhmaṇa

There is a practical example in this connection. While Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was touring in southern India, in the Raṅganātha temple He saw an illiterate *brāhmaṇa* trying to read the *Bhagavad-gītā.* Many people were coming and criticizing him.

"Well, *brāhmaṇa,* how are you reading *Bhagavad-gītā?*"

He did not reply.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu approached him and saw that the *brāhmaṇa* was looking at the *Bhagavad-gītā* with tears gliding down his cheeks, so He could understand, "Here is a pure devotee."

He asked him, "Well, *brāhmaṇa,* what you are reading?"

The *brāhmaṇa* replied, "Sir, I cannot read. I am illiterate and cannot read the Sanskrit."

Caitanya Mahāprabhu then asked him, "Then what are you doing?"

"My Guru Mahārāja knew that I am illiterate, but he told me to read the *Bhagavad-gītā* every day. So on his order, although I do not know what is written there, I am trying to read."

"Oh, that's very nice," Caitanya Mahāprabhu said. "You are carrying out the order of your Guru Mahārāja. But it appears that you are crying. Why are you crying if you cannot read?"

"Because as soon as I take this *Bhagavad-gītā* in my hand, I see the picture of Arjuna asking Kṛṣṇa to place his chariot on the battlefield, and Kṛṣṇa is driving the chariot on Arjuna's order. Seeing this creates some feeling in me: 'Oh, Kṛṣṇa is so kind, so nice. Although He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, He is carrying the order of His devotee as a servant.' When I feel this, I cry: 'Oh, how kind Kṛṣṇa is! How merciful Kṛṣṇa is!'"

Caitanya Mahāprabhu embraced him.

"You are reading *Bhagavad-gītā.* It is not about literacy or education or knowing grammar and putting forth a jugglery of words. That is not reading. If one feels the purport of *Bhagavad-gītā,* that is reading *Bhagavad-gītā.*"

Kṛṣṇa consciousness does not depend on a literary career. A devotee is satisfied if he can think of Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa wants that.

man-manā bhava mad-bhakto
mad-yājī māṁ namaskuru

"Always think of Me, become My devotee, worship Me, and offer your homage unto Me." (*Bhagavad-gītā* 18.65). Kṛṣṇa never said, "Become a great *paṇḍita* or grammarian to read *Bhagavad-gītā* or *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.*" If you are a *paṇḍita* or grammarian, you can use your knowledge to read the scriptures. Otherwise, anyone, even a child, can do this: *man-manā bhava mad-bhakto mad-yājī māṁ namaskuru.* One can come into this temple and offer obeisances. That will also do.

Therefore a devotee can be satisfied in any condition of life, provided he can think of Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet. That's all. That much.

Therefore Prahlāda Mahārāja said, "I have no problem in crossing the ocean of nescience. That solution is already there. Wherever I am I shall think of Your lotus feet. That's all."

"But you appear to be unhappy."

"Yes, I am unhappy."

"Why?"

Śoce tato vimukha-cetasaḥ: "I am thinking of these rascals who have rejected Your instructions in the *Bhagavad-gītā.*"

Busy Wasting Time

Like monkeys and dogs, people are busy. You will see they are very busy, going here, going there, going there—just like monkeys, jumping from one tree to another. Wherever the monkey stands, he moves his arm or his body. He may appear to be very busy, but people will immediately take a stick: "Go away! Go away! Go away!"

People are making big, big plans to be happy like the monkeys. Therefore here it is said, *arthān samīheta nikāma-kāmaḥ:* "He is simply bound to material enjoyment by lusty desires, and all his plans are made for this purpose."

It is the duty of everyone to do something for his own welfare. But, as today's verse begins, *lokaḥ svayaṁ śreyasi naṣṭa-dṛṣṭiḥ:* "These rascals are blind to their real interest." *Śreyas* means real interest, and *preyas* means immediate profit. *Nikāma-kāmaḥ,* sense gratification, is very nice immediately. "I enjoy sex life. This is very nice. Why shall I chant Hare Kṛṣṇa? Let me enjoy sex." *Preyasi:* This is pleasure. But it is not real pleasure; therefore the verse says *naṣṭa-dṛṣṭiḥ,* "without sight." A rascal does not know that sense pleasure is not actual pleasure. It creates different types of miserable conditions. *Naṣṭa-dṛṣṭiḥ.* The rascal has no eyes to see this fact.

Take sex life, for example. The ignorant person does not know that it is the cause of suffering. There are two kinds of sex life, legal and illegal. Legal is sex in married life. And sex without marriage, like cats and dogs in the street or here and there, that is illegal. In spiritual life, legal sex is allowed. Kṛṣṇa says, *dharmāviruddho … kāmo 'smi:* "I am sex life according to religious principles." (*Bhagavad-gītā* 7.11) The scripture allows sex life for a married man and woman to create progeny. But illegal, illicit sex is most abominable. Still, in either case, illicit or legal, sex causes so much suffering.

Consider the sufferings caused by illicit sex. Now abortion, killing the child, is going on. That is very sinful. Those involved must suffer. But they do not know this. *Ananta-duḥkhaṁ ca na veda mūḍhaḥ.* They are taking the risk of suffering life after life. Those who kill the child within the womb will be punished. They will also enter the womb of a mother, somebody will kill them, and they will enter another mother's womb and again be killed. They will go from one womb to another as many times as they have killed. They will never see the light of the world. That is the punishment.

But people do not know this. *Ananta-duḥkhaṁ ca na veda mūḍhaḥ.* They do not know how the laws of nature are working. A life for a life. You have no right to kill any life. You cannot kill even an ant. If you kill, then you have to suffer.

The Sage's Punishment

These are not stories. There are many instructive incidents described in the scripture. Vidura was an incarnation of Yamarāja, the great lord of death, and a sage cursed him to be born as the son of a maidservant. Why? The sage was brought to the court of Yamarāja, and he was to be punished by having a lancet pierce through his rectum and out the top of his head.

The sage asked Yamarāja, "Why have you put me into this tribulation. Why have you given me this punishment? What is my fault?"

Yamarāja explained, "In your childhood you pierced the rectum of an ant with a nail. Therefore you must be punished like this."

Just see. In childhood playing he pierced the ant. Sometimes we have seen children do that, and it counts. You cannot harm any animal, any living being. You cannot do that.

But these rascals are regularly killing. Although they have a human body, although they have scientific intelligence, they do not know how nature's law works. They do not care to know. They say these ideas are all mythology. But this is not mythology. *Na veda mūḍhaḥ.* They do not know the law of nature. *Ananta-duḥkham:* If you harm others, you must suffer.

What Is the Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement?

Founded in 1966 by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) carries on a great ancient tradition rooted in the *Bhagavad-gītā,* the teachings Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke five millennia ago. The *Gītā* and the other Vedic scriptures declare Kṛṣṇa to be the original person, God Himself, who appears periodically in this world to liberate all living beings.

Only five hundred years ago, Kṛṣṇa descended as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to teach the most sublime and effective means of meditation for the present day: the chanting of the names of God, especially as found in the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.

Today members of ISKCON continue Lord Caitanya's movement by distributing the teachings of Lord Kṛṣṇa and the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra all over the world.

Pronunciation

We spell Sanskrit words and names by a phonetic system that lets you know how to say each word. Pronounce short **a** like the **u** in b**u**t, long **ā** like the **a** in f**a**r (and held twice as long as the short **a**). Pronounce **e** like the **a** in ev**a**de, long **ī** like the **i** in p**i**que. Pronounce the vowel **ṛ** like the **ri** in **ri**m, and **c** like the **ch** in **ch**air. Pronounce consonants like **ch, jh,** and **dh** as in staun**ch-h**eart, hedg**e-h**og, and re**d-h**ot. Pronounce **ś** and **ṣ** like **sh.** So for *Kṛṣṇa* say KRISHNA, for *Caitanya* say CHAITANYA.

Spiritual Names

ISKCON members receive names of Lord Kṛṣṇa or his great devotees, combined with Dāsa, for men, or Dāsī, for women, both of which mean "servant." For instance, the name Kṛṣṇa Dāsa means "servant of Kṛṣṇa."

We should be very, very careful. We are implicating ourselves step by step. People do not know this. The material world is the place where at every step we create more difficulties: *padaṁ padaṁ yad vipadām.*

The *Bhāgavatam* (10.14.58) says:

samāśritā ye pada-pallava-plavaṁ
mahat-padaṁ puṇya-yaśo murāreḥ
bhavāmbudhir vatsa-padaṁ paraṁ
padaṁ
padaṁ padaṁ yad vipadāṁ na
teśām

"For one who has accepted the boat of the lotus feet of the Lord, who is the shelter of the cosmic manifestation and is famous as Mukunda, or the giver of liberation, the ocean of the material world is like the water contained in a calf's footprint. *Paraṁ padam,* or the place where there are no material miseries, or Vaikuṇṭha, is his goal, not the place where there is danger in every step of life."

How does one accept the boat of the lotus feet of the Lord? Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has warned:

niṣkiñcanasya bhagavad-
bhajanonmukhasya
pāraṁ paraṁ jigamiṣor bhava-
sāgarasya
sandarśanaṁ viṣayiṇām atha yoṣitāṁ ca
hā hanta hanta viṣa-bhakṣaṇato 'py
asādhu

"For a person who is seriously desiring to cross the material ocean and engage in the transcendental loving service of the Lord without material motives, seeing a materialist engaged in sense gratification or seeing a woman who is similarly interested is more abominable than drinking poison willingly." (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya* 11.8) Anyone who desires to render devotional service dedicates his life for the service of Bhagavān, Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa demands that. A person must decide, "Yes, I shall fully surrender to Kṛṣṇa." Such a surrendered person is *niṣkiñcana,* "one who possesses nothing." "Surrender" means that one has finished all one's material business. That includes karma, or fruitive work, as well as *jñāna,* or philosophical speculation, and ordinary yoga. *Bhakti,* devotional service, means that one is done with all of these. One wants only to surrender to Kṛṣṇa.

We have to become *niṣkiñcana*—no more material business. Who can do that? *Bhagavad-bhajanonmukhasya*: One who is eager to serve the Lord.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.3) Kṛṣṇa says, "If you do not come to Me, if you do not accept Me, then you will continue the cycle of birth and death." And that means *ananta-duḥkham:* life after life your suffering will go on.

We should be very, very careful not to waste this human form of life even for a moment. That is real life. Rūpa Gosvāmī has written, *avyartha-kālatvam:* A devotee should always be alert to see, "One moment has passed. Did I waste it or use it well?" That should be the point. *Āyūṣaḥ kṣaṇa eko 'pi na labhya svarṇa-koṭibhiḥ.* Cāṇakya Paṇḍita has said that one moment of our life cannot be returned in exchange for millions of dollars. Those who are advancing in spiritual life—how careful they should be! Therefore Rūpa Gosvāmī has given the formula *avyartha-kālatvam:* Not a single moment should be wasted without chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Thank you very much. ✿

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Glossary

Ācārya—a spiritual master who teaches by example.

Balarāma—Lord Kṛṣṇa's first expansion, who acts in the role of Lord Kṛṣṇa's elder brother.

Battle of Kurukshetra—an epic battle for rule of the world, fought five thousand years ago.

***Bhagavad-gītā*—**the sacred book in which Lord Kṛṣṇa gives the essence of knowledge to His friend and disciple Arjuna. (Cited as Bg.)

Bhakti—devotional service to the Supreme Lord.

Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura—the spiritual master of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

Bhakti-yoga—linking with the Supreme Lord through devotional service.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu—the incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa who appeared five hundred years ago to teach the chanting of the names of God as the religion for the present age.

Darśana—"viewing," audience with a deity or saintly person.

Dharma—(1) ordained duties or religious principles; (2) one's eternal, natural occupation (i.e., devotional service to the Lord).

Godhead—the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Reality, progressively realized first as the impersonal all-pervasive oneness, more fully as the Supersoul within the heart of every living being, and ultimately as the all-opulent Supreme Person.

Gurukula—a school where children learn the philosophy and practices of Kṛṣṇa consciousness along with regular academic subjects (literally "the place of the guru").

Hare Kṛṣṇa—the great mantra Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

ISKCON—the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Japa—individual chanting of names of God, usually while counting on beads.

Kali-yuga—in the endlessly repeated cycle of four cosmic ages, the present and worst age, the Age of Quarrel, of which 5,000 of 432,000 years have passed.

Karma—material action; its inevitable reaction; or the law by which such action and reaction are governed.

Kīrtana—congregational singing of names of God, usually accompanied by cymbals (*karatālas*) and drums (*mṛdaṅgas*).

Kṛṣṇa—the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His original transcendental form (see "Godhead").

***Mahābhārata*—**the epic history of ancient India, a history in which the *Bhagavad-gītā* appears as the most important and well-known text.

Māyā—illusion; the energy of the Supreme Lord that deludes living entities into forgetting their spiritual nature and forgetting God.

Māyāvādī—one who regards the Abs ultimately impersonal.

Modes of nature—the three qualities (goo and ignorance) that hold sway over all action in the material world.

Nityānanda—the incarnation of Lord Balarāma who appeared with Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Prasādam—vegetarian food that has been prepared for the Lord and offered to Him with devotion (literally "mercy").

***Purāṇas*—**Vedic histories.

Rādhārāṇī—Lord Kṛṣṇa's consort and pleasure potency.

Rathayātrā—"chariot festival": a festival in which the form of Kṛṣṇa is borne in procession on a large canopy-topped chariot or float, especially the festival originating in Puri, India, for Jagannātha (Lord Kṛṣṇa, "the Lord of the universe").

Sannyāsa—the renounced life of a man who relinquishes home to dedicate himself fully to the Supreme.

Śrī—an honorific meaning "opulent" (similarly: Śrīla, Śrīmad, Śrīmān, Śrīmatī).

Śrīla Prabhupāda—His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

***Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*—**the most important of the eighteen *Purāṇas,* which tells of the nature and pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa and His devotees.

Supersoul—the form of the Lord who resides in every heart along with the individual soul.

***Upaniṣads*—**the 108 essential philosophical treatises that appear within the *Vedas.*

Vaiṣṇava—a devotee of the Supreme Lord (from the word *Viṣṇu*).

Varṇāśrama—the Vedic social system. It organizes society into four occupational and four spiritual divisions (*varṇas* and *āśramas*). The members of the four *varṇas* are the *brāhmaṇas* (intellectuals and priests), the *kṣatriyas* (administrators and soldiers), the *vaiśyas* (farmers and businessmen), and the *śūdras* (laborers and artisans). The members of the four *āśramas* are the *brahmacārīs* (celibate students), *gṛhasthas* (married people), *vānaprasthas* (retired people), and *sannyāsīs* (renunciants).

***Vedas*—**the hymns of knowledge revealed by the Lord Himself at the beginning of creation.

Vedic—pertaining to the culture in which the *Vedas* and related scriptures guide all aspects of human life.

Viṣṇu—any form of the Personality of Godhead (see "Godhead"); the forms the Lord manifests to create and sustain the material world.

Vṛndāvana—the transcendental abode of Lord Kṛṣṇa, mirrored on earth as the town in India where Kṛṣṇa appeared five thousand years ago.

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Kṛṣṇa's Econ

Taking shelter of Kṛṣṇa is the key to peace and prosperity.

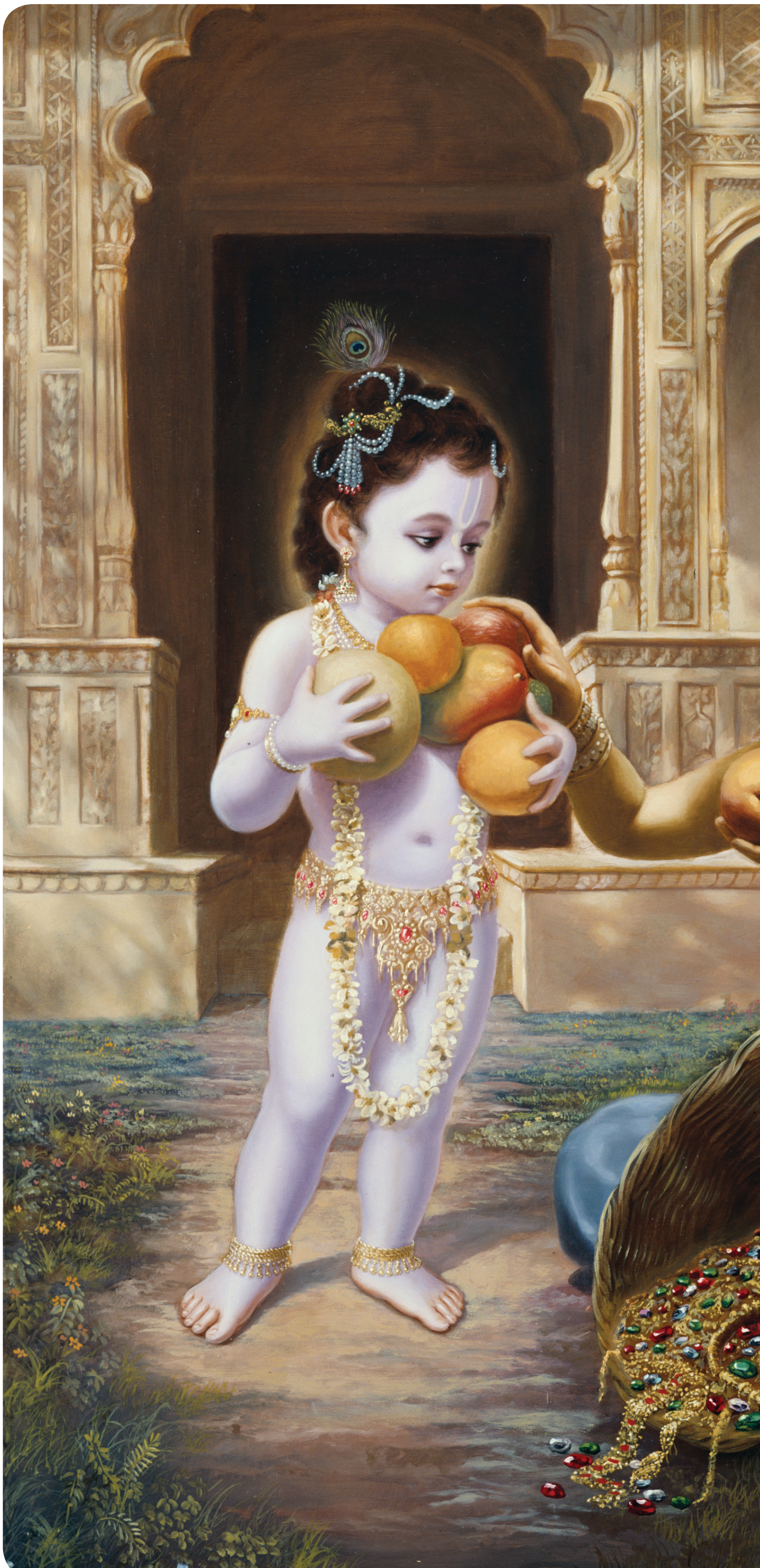
By Arcana Siddhī Devī Dāsī

LAST YEAR, eight Academy Awards went to a low-budget movie filmed in India, *Slumdog Millionaire.* Moviegoers reported feeling uplifted by the story. The idea that a beggar from the slums of India could win a million dollars on a game show filled them with hope. Although the story wasn't true, it presented a popular theme found throughout the ages: from pauper to prince.

In the current receding economic tide, the opposite scenario is much more realistic and prevalent: from riches to rags or prince to pauper. So it isn't hard to understand how *Slumdog Millionaire* could provide millions of viewers some hope that things in their life can turn around for the better.

Throughout history the economy has gone through cycles. Generally economic downturns result from excessive greed and exploitation. So should anyone be surprised about the current state of affairs? If we are immersed in the mentality of enjoying separately from the Lord on this material plane of existence, then we are subjected to the laws that govern this world.

We know from the *Bhagavad-gītā* that this realm is one of duality—happiness and distress, loss and gain, victory and defeat. And everything is temporary. This is a recipe for anxiety, which is always heightened during difficult times. But those who have taken to the path of devotion to God, Kṛṣṇa, are under a different set of rules. We might call these rules Kṛṣṇa's economics, where 1 – 1 = 1. For pure devotees, who live fully in the spiritual reality, nothing is ever diminished; resources are never lost or depleted. And even for those not yet perfect,



When a vendor fills Lord Kṛṣṇa's hands with fruit, He responds by filling her basket with jewels.

omics: 1–1=1

Painting by Muralīdhara Dāsa

Kṛṣṇa's economics apply according to the devotee's level of progress.

Śrīla Prabhupāda tells a story to exemplify the principles of this economics. Once there was a young boy in India who came from a very poor family. He was a student in the *gurukula,* and his teacher was hosting a big festival for the community. He asked all his students to bring some food for the event. When the boy went home and asked his mother what he could bring, she told him they were too poor and couldn't contribute anything. The little boy began to sob. Seeing her son in distress, she advised him to go to forest and find Dīna Bandhu (a name for Kṛṣṇa meaning "the friend of the poor").

Feeling some hope, the little boy went to the forest calling out loudly, "Dīna Bandhu, please come. Dīna Bandhu, please come."

After some time, Kṛṣṇa appeared. Hearing of the boy's plight, He told him to tell his teacher that he would bring yogurt for the festival. The Lord instructed him to return to the forest on the day of the event, and He would give him the yogurt.

The teacher was pleased to hear that the child would supply the yogurt for the festival, and on the morning of that special day, the little boy went to the forest, again calling for his Lord to come. Kṛṣṇa appeared with a pot of yogurt, and the boy happily went to school with his treasure.

But when the teacher saw that the boy had brought only a small pot of yogurt, he was angry .

"What! You have brought only this much yogurt? Hundreds of people will be attending our festival."

In his anger the teacher knocked the pot from the boy's grip, and the yogurt spilled out onto the floor. When the teacher picked up the pot, he was amazed to see that it was still full of yogurt. He again spilled the yogurt, and to his astonishment it remained full.

This story shows, among other things, why there can never be a recession in the spiritual world. If we take shelter of the Lord, He will protect us from any lack or limitation. Kṛṣṇa tells us in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.22) that He will preserve what a fully surrendered devotee has and provide what he lacks. Kṛṣṇa will take care of our needs to the degree that we are dedicating our life to Him.

Examples from Early ISKCON

Devotees over the years have had many experiences to verify Kṛṣṇa's promise to provide and take care of His devotees. In the very early days of Prabhupāda's mission, some devotees living together in San Francisco didn't have money to pay the rent for their apartment. The morning of their impending eviction, they were leaving their apartment to go down the street for the morning service at the temple. As they came outside, hundred dollar bills floated down from an undetectable source. They gathered up the money and were able to pay their rent and give a sizable donation to Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Kṛṣṇa protects His fledgling devotees from becoming enamored by too many material possessions or becoming proud of them.

When devotees in Philadelphia faced a similar situation, they decided to continue their regular spiritual service of public chanting and depend on Kṛṣṇa's mercy. The day the rent was due, a man they had never seen before and never saw again came up to their chanting party and handed them an envelope marked "For Krishna." It contained the exact amount of the rent.

In both these examples, Kṛṣṇa placed devotees in a situation where their only recourse was to depend on Him. He sometimes places devotees in a difficult situation just to prove that He is the source of their supply. In this way the devotees' faith becomes stronger, and they become free from anxiety in future distressful situations, knowing that Kṛṣṇa will provide for all their needs.

Using Resources In Kṛṣṇa's Service

Another principle in Kṛṣṇa's economics is that the more devotees are able to use their resources in the Lord's service, the more they will be given. Śrīla Prabhupāda exemplified this principle in his outreach efforts after coming to the United States in 1965. In just a few short years, his mission had over a hundred temples throughout the world, with many resources to spread Lord Caitanya's teachings.

If we misuse resources meant for the Lord's service, then He may restrict our assets or take them away. If wealth causes someone to forget about his or her service to the Lord, then out of love for that person, the Lord may confiscate the wealth. Kṛṣṇa protects His fledgling devotees from becoming enamored by too many material possessions or becoming proud of them.

Another important tenet of Kṛṣṇa's economics is that when we give, we get. Kṛṣṇa tells us in the *Bhagavad-gītā* that as we surrender to Him, He reciprocates accordingly. Money, time, our labor, our material attachments—we can give all these to the Lord, and He will reciprocate beyond our greatest expectations.

The Fortunate Fruit Vendor

The scriptures contain many stories to support this principle. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* tells the story of Kṛṣṇa, as a toddler, going out to barter with a fruit vendor. He held some grains in His small hands. But by the time He reached the vendor, most of the grains had slipped through His little fingers, and He had almost nothing left to give her.

Seeing the Lord's enchanting, effulgent face, the fruit vendor felt love in her heart for the child. She piled His arms full of fruits. In exchange the Lord filled her basket with jewels.

Examples of Kṛṣṇa's generosity shouldn't inspire us to enter a mercantile relationship with Him. We shouldn't think, "I'll give so much to the Lord, and I'll get back so much." While it is true that Kṛṣṇa may fulfill such desires, we will be missing out on the real reward, love for Him. We should give to Him in a mood of service and beg to be able to take part in His eternal service. In the eternal reality, everything is perpetually provided, and there is no anxiety over how to maintain oneself.

We can take inspiration from pure devotees, who have no desire for anything beyond life's bare necessities. Their consciousness is merged in the transcendent reality, the world where wealth is unlimited and trees fulfill any desire (although the residents desire only things to serve Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa). They eat sumptuous, rich food, not for sense gratification, but because it makes Kṛṣṇa happy. They wear beautiful clothing and ornaments only to make Kṛṣṇa happy, and their wealth is a pure, ever-increasing emotion of love for their Lord.

If we apply these principles in our lives, we too will enter a consciousness where Kṛṣṇa's economics prevail. Even while living in this world, we can become free of our material conditioning. Kṛṣṇa's stimulus package for the present times is to chant His holy names: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. These names will purify our heart of desires for things that separate us from loving Kṛṣṇa. This formula of chanting has the potency to bring peace and prosperity to the whole world.

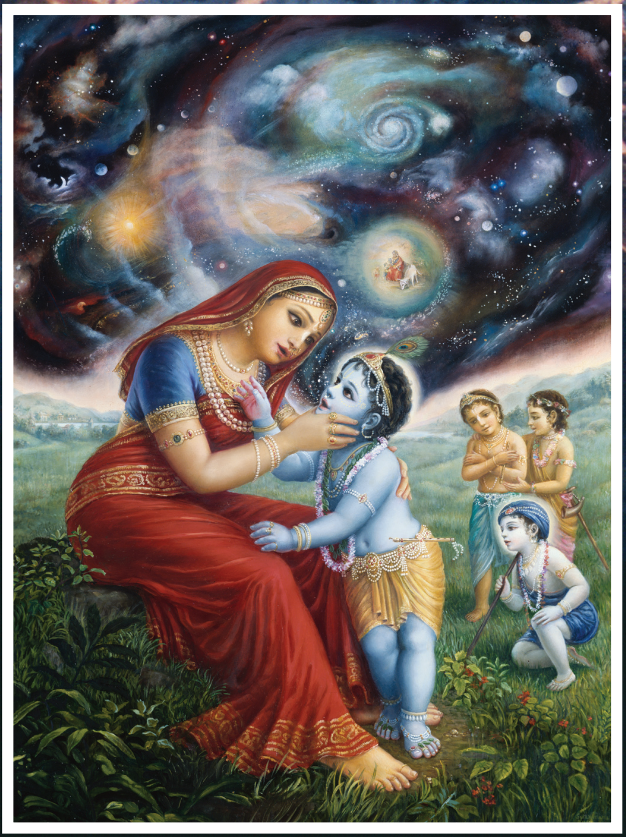
Arcana Siddhī Devī Dāsī was initiated by Prabhupāda in 1976. She lives with her husband and son in Sandy Ridge, North Carolina, where she works as a family therapist.

Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa
Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare
Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma
Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare

PRONUNCIATION: ha-ray, krish-na, ra-ma (rhymes with "drama")

Yamarāja Dāsa

2009 New York Rathayātrā

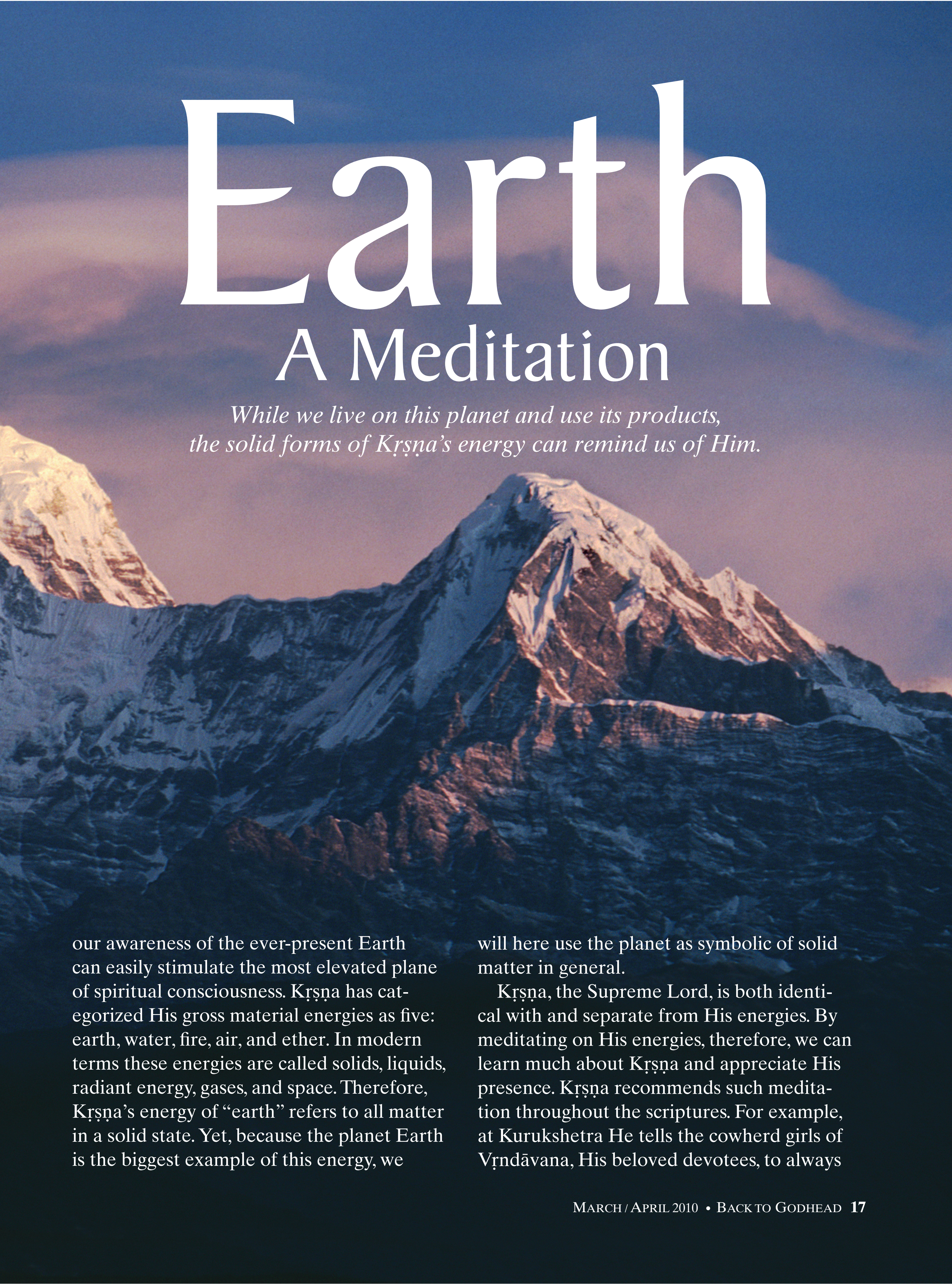


Background photo: © Alan Crawford | istockphoto.com. Inset painting by Yadurāṇī Devī Dāsī.

By Ūrmilā Devī Dāsī

IT MAY SEEM THERE can be nothing more ordinary, more the essence of matter, or more mundane than the Earth. But when we take a moment to notice and reflect,

Mountains like the Himalayas (background) are majestic displays of Kṛṣṇa's energy in the form of solid things. When Mother Yaśodā looks into Kṛṣṇa's mouth, she sees the universe, including the material elements in their basic forms.



Earth

A Meditation

While we live on this planet and use its products, the solid forms of Kṛṣṇa's energy can remind us of Him.

our awareness of the ever-present Earth can easily stimulate the most elevated plane of spiritual consciousness. Kṛṣṇa has categorized His gross material energies as five: earth, water, fire, air, and ether. In modern terms these energies are called solids, liquids, radiant energy, gases, and space. Therefore, Kṛṣṇa's energy of "earth" refers to all matter in a solid state. Yet, because the planet Earth is the biggest example of this energy, we will here use the planet as symbolic of solid matter in general.

Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord, is both identical with and separate from His energies. By meditating on His energies, therefore, we can learn much about Kṛṣṇa and appreciate His presence. Kṛṣṇa recommends such meditation throughout the scriptures. For example, at Kurukshetra He tells the cowherd girls of Vṛndāvana, His beloved devotees, to always

feel His presence through His energies. Prabhupāda comments: "This important instruction by Lord Kṛṣṇa to the *gopīs* can be utilized by all devotees engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. . . . The cosmic manifestation is nothing but a display of Kṛṣṇa's energy, and because the energy is not different from the energetic, nothing is different from Kṛṣṇa. When this absolute consciousness, Kṛṣṇa consciousness, . . . is present, then we are not separated from Kṛṣṇa."

The Planet Earth Reminds Us of the Lord

Rocky peaks of the Olympic Mountains, wearing hair of snow, poke through the clouds on the horizon, viewed across the water from where I walk on Vancouver Island in Canada. Huge, solid, beautiful, majestic, those towers of earth draw one's eyes again and again.

Other than occasional dramatic displays such as cloud-piercing mountains, the Earth often goes unnoticed in daily life. But the Earth exhibits qualities that can easily remind us of the Lord's qualities. For example, the Earth is solid and dependable, and Kṛṣṇa is so dependable that even demonic beings know that if they follow universal rules, the Lord will not harm them. Anyone can depend on Kṛṣṇa to accept offerings made with faith and devotion, regardless of the person's background or material qualifications.

The Earth is tolerant and continues to support us even though we abuse her by drilling for oil and strip-mining her body, and by spilling the blood of her children upon her in war. In a similar way, Kṛṣṇa continues to be the friend of all living beings, even those who blaspheme Him and try to cause Him pain.

The solid nature of Earth gives us a sense of balance, harmony, and grounding when walking upon her. Similarly, anyone in touch with Kṛṣṇa can stay undisturbed in any situation.

The Earth can sometimes change her face from that of a benign solid object to one of sudden anger in

Bhūrijana Dāsa

Devotees worship earth in the form of Govardhana Hill in Vrindavan (above), and they take stones from Govardhana, known as Govardhana śilās, *to worship in temples and in their homes (right).*

the form of quakes and volcanoes. Similarly, Kṛṣṇa's face, normally graced with a sweet, gentle smile, can sometimes show loving anger, such as when His incarnation Balarāma caused an earthquake in ancient Delhi to bring the rulers there to their senses.

Despite the occasional upheavals, the Earth is the foundation and support of everything, its mountains compared to the bones of the Lord's universal form. Kṛṣṇa also tells us in the *Bhagavad-gītā* that He is the support of all, holding everything as a string holds the pearls of a necklace.

Kṛṣṇa sustains and maintains all living beings. We can easily remember this truth when we think about how most of our necessities come from the Earth. One of our prime necessities is shelter. In the form of the materials that make up our homes, the Earth is the source of shelter from the weather, intruders, and animal pests. Brick, cement, steel, wood—all are directly from the Earth or grow from her. When we look around our shelter, we can meditate on how Kṛṣṇa is the ultimate shelter. His love, wisdom, mercy, and kindness offer us the shelter of spiritual knowledge. When we attain that knowledge, we have no fear of heat, cold, rain, decay, or thieves. Rather, we know we are eternal spiritual beings never touched by any material difficulty. Beyond that, one who knows Kṛṣṇa finds deep shelter in His all-good love, a love whose quality and quantity is millions of times greater than the love we feel when coming into our mother's arms in our childhood home.

People commonly feel a sense of shelter from the part of the planet where they were born or spent their childhood. That attachment can be so strong that huge armies go to war for the sake of their homeland, risking death and lifelong injury. What price humans are willing to pay for attachment to a particular piece of the Earth! Earth is simply part of Kṛṣṇa's material energy, representing a fragment of a fragment of His opulence and splendor. Yet attachment to homeland brings enough pleasure that people will sacrifice much to keep a connection with it. We can think of how attachment to the ultimate source of Earth, Kṛṣṇa Himself, gives unbounded and ever-expanding satisfaction. Those who taste a drop of attachment to Kṛṣṇa gladly surrender more than any soldier to deepen it. They'll sacrifice everything and anything to increase it. Yet upon doing so, they feel as if they have given nothing at all in comparison to what they are gaining.

Our attachment to the Earth is not merely emotional. Our bodies, and indeed all physical objects, are drawn to the ground by gravity. Because we are always experiencing gravity, it gives us one of the easiest opportunities to turn our hearts

Ūrmilā Devī Dāsī

and minds to Kṛṣṇa at every moment. God is the all-attractive, His attractive force functioning in part under the name of gravity. If we take a minute now to feel how we are being pulled, anchored, attracted to the Earth, we can think about how that attractive force is really the energy of Kṛṣṇa's expansion Balarāma, or Śeṣa.

The Earth attracts not only through gravity but also through magnetic energy. We can remember how the saint Prahlāda declared that his mind and heart were drawn to Kṛṣṇa as naturally as iron to a magnet.

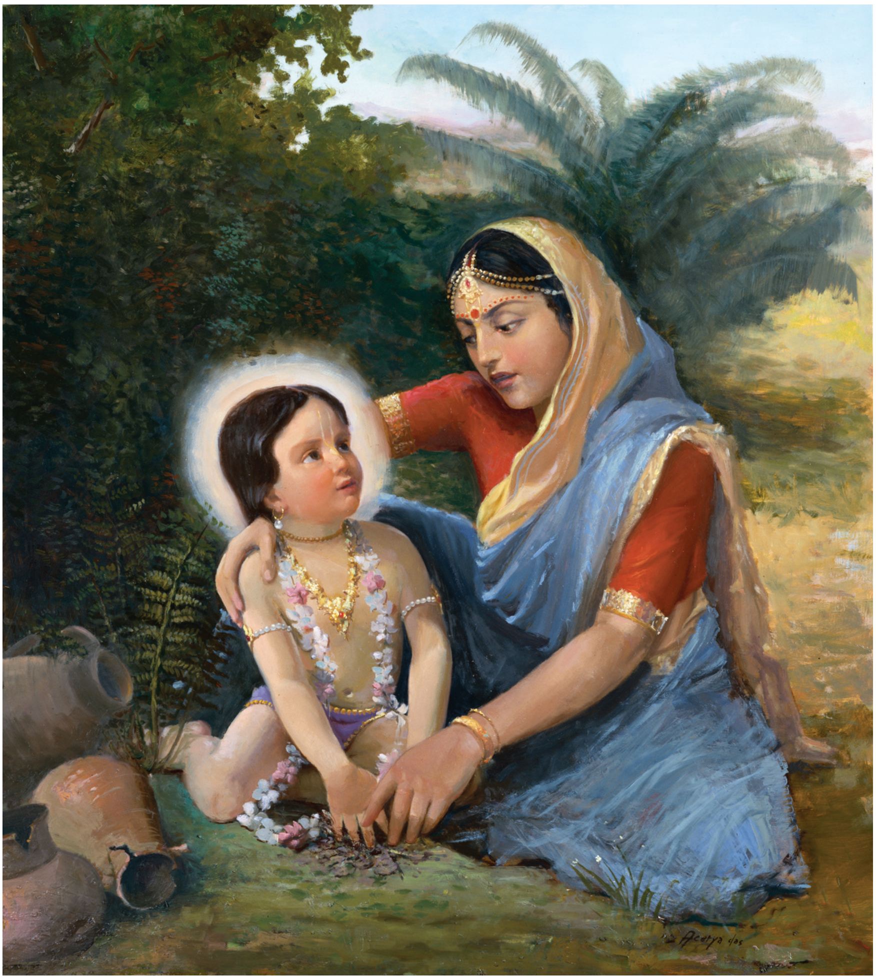
The Earth planet is the largest object we directly touch daily, and her size can remind us of how Kṛṣṇa is the greatest, the largest—bigger than the biggest. Just as we cannot see beyond the horizon, so we can never know all of God and His unlimited, expanding qualities and activities.

The Bible says that our bodies come from dust and return there as well. Our bodies are formed from the food we eat, which grows in the Earth. And when we, the soul, leave our body at death, the body is buried or burned, either of which returns it to a state of mixing again with the Earth. Dead bodies thus become the basis for the growth of new bodies. Similarly, Kṛṣṇa says that He is the beginning, middle, and end of all things; He is their origin and their dissolution. Thus we see His divine qualities in the Earth.

Those of us who have worked on farms or gardens know how deeply satisfying it can be to work with the dirt. Planting, weeding, watering, fertilizing—all may give a sense of peace and satisfaction rarely found in the concrete jungles of modern cities. Even city dwellers flock to parks where they can sit on rocks or grass-covered ground and lean against trees. Walking barefoot in sand or soil and getting one's hands full of rich loam is a delight that has attracted children for millennia. When contacting soil, we can meditate on how fulfilling it is for the soul to connect with its ultimate source, the Absolute Truth, Kṛṣṇa.

Satisfaction from handling soil comes in part from the fresh smell of the land. Kṛṣṇa says that He is the fragrance of earth. Whatever scent we find in flowers, fruits, vegetables, grasses—anything grown from the Earth—reveals some part of Kṛṣṇa's divine fragrance. And what of malodorous smells originating from dirt? Even they represent Kṛṣṇa, in His aspect as the eventual destroyer of the material world.

Earth can also be used as a medium for artistic expression. Paper or fabric on which to write or paint comes from the Earth's products. Materials of sculpture are generally taken from the Earth. Mineral pigments abound in rocks, and brilliant hues are found in plants growing from the Earth. Souls in human bodies who shape the Earth and her products in artistic ways show how a tiny spiritual portion of Kṛṣṇa can manifest creativity and beauty. Whenever we see such products of artistic skill, or when we engage in the creative process, we can easily remember how all the ingredients and the ability are from Kṛṣṇa, whose own artistic skill we can glorify and only poorly imitate.


Painting by Ācārya Dāsa

Lord Caitanya once ate dirt to teach His mother an essential point of Vaiṣṇava philosophy—that everything is not "one."

Wealth and Earth

The Earth reminds us of Kṛṣṇa's unlimited wealth, as she is the source of our wealth in the material world. Land itself is one of the greatest sources of wealth in all societies at all times. We enhance the value of land with buildings, made of materials directly or indirectly from the Earth. Products of earth such as metals, gems, oil, coal, natural gas, and so forth, are all major sources of wealth.

Rukmiṇī Devī, Lord Kṛṣṇa's principal queen in Dwarka, said that He can be described as not possessing wealth because He is Himself that very wealth. Kṛṣṇa is the Earth and thus wealth itself. Whenever we deal with wealth, whether paper, metal, plastic, or any other form, we can easily recall that the wealth comes from Earth and, ultimately, Kṛṣṇa. One who thinks like this uses all wealth in ways that please Kṛṣṇa, and accepts whatever opulence He desires to give His servant as a merciful gift, called *prasādam.*

Kṛṣṇa's Transcendant Abode

Walking through a forest or garden heavy with green, we can remember that Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of lords and king of kings, prefers for His highest spiritual realm a simple pastoral setting. Certainly Kṛṣṇa has innumerable transcendent residences, prototypes for the grand royal palaces and cities that have flourished over history on this planet. But in such a regal atmosphere Kṛṣṇa does not display His full range of intimate loving dealings with perfect souls. Rather, He likes to sport in exchanges of love surrounded by forests and rivers. In the supreme spiritual kingdom, Vṛndāvana, the Lord prefers necklaces of berries to those of diamonds. Flowers resembling pearls decorate His spiritual form. He is a village boy herding cows with His friends, using hard fruit as balls and minerals as decoration. The land in Kṛṣṇa's ultimate paradise is a fully conscious person. The ground is soft and made of varieties of colored jewels.

Kṛṣṇa's Pastimes Related to Earth

Kṛṣṇa has many sportive pastimes related to the Earth. For example, early in universal creation the demon Hiraṇyākṣa caused the Earth to fall out of orbit. Kṛṣṇa assumed a gigantic form as a boar and rescued the Earth on the ends of His tusks.

In regard to soil, when Kṛṣṇa appeared on this planet about five thousand years ago, some of His young cowherd friends accused Him of eating dirt. When His mother looked into His mouth, she saw not only some dirt but the entire planet Earth. She also saw the sun, moon, stars, and the whole universe. Although astonished by seeing Kṛṣṇa's opulence and power, she retained her affection for her young child.

In Kṛṣṇa's incarnation as Lord Caitanya, He also ate dirt as a young boy. His mother scolded Him and asked why He would prefer dirt to sweets. The Lord replied that sweets are ultimately just a transformation of earth, so why discriminate? The Lord's mother, however, refuted this monistic philosophy by saying that although dirt and sweets are the same from one point of view, eating dirt directly will simply cause disease. Lord Caitanya was pleased to hear His devotee expounding a more nuanced view of reality than monism.

Kṛṣṇa extensively describes in the *Bhagavad-gītā* how to view the world through a lens that reveals Him.

Although Kṛṣṇa is always earth in the general sense that His energies are at once the same and different from Himself, He is directly His earthly abode of Vṛndāvana. While devotees understand this point about Vṛndāvana in general, they worship, in particular, one place in Vṛndāvana as Kṛṣṇa: Govardhana Hill. That's because Kṛṣṇa, during His pastime of lifting Govardhana Hill, declared that He is the hill. In the form of rocks and dirt, Kṛṣṇa provides services for His own devotees. He gives His cows grass and water, and He provides His friends with caves, beautiful sporting places, and jewels and minerals for ornamentation. Out of love for His devotees, He takes this form as a servant of His own servants. Since each part of the Lord is also the complete Lord, even a tiny pebble from this hill is a full manifestation of Kṛṣṇa. Devotees therefore worship stones from Govardhana Hill on their altars just as they worship the deity of Kṛṣṇa.

The Deity

The deity of Kṛṣṇa is yet another personal incarnation made of materials from the Earth. He appears in the deity form, usually of rock, metal, or wood, to accept worship from those whose vision allows them to see only gross matter. Because Kṛṣṇa and His form are absolute, a rendition of the Lord's form according to the descriptions of the scripture is the Lord Himself. Therefore, although neophytes in spiritual life think they're seeing a form of matter, the deity incarnation of the Lord is spiritual. From Kṛṣṇa's perspective, matter and spirit are equally His energy. Conditioned souls see some of His energy as matter only because of selfish desire and contaminated consciousness. Those who serve a genuine deity under the direction of a spiritual master will gradually invoke Kṛṣṇa's mercy, and He will reveal how the deity is none other than Himself.

Seeing God

Gaining the eyes of love by which one can see God everywhere may seem mystical. But Kṛṣṇa is so eager for us to see Him that He extensively describes in the *Bhagavad-gītā* how to view the world through a lens that reveals Him. That lens is nothing more than affection demonstrated by voluntarily turning our minds and hearts to see what is always there. One does not, therefore, have to travel to a place such as the Himalayas to find God. The ever-present pull of the Earth on our bodies and minds is ample evidence that Kṛṣṇa is with us always.

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THE VEDIC OBSERVER

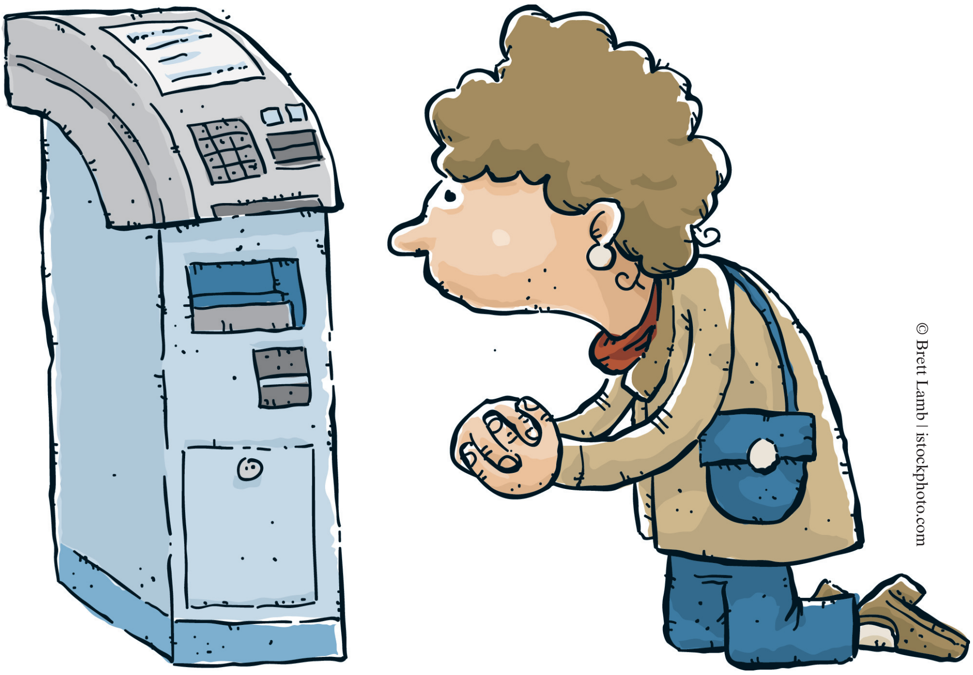
Transcendental Commentary on the Issues of the Day

Photographer: Susan Quinland-Stringer / Agency: Dreamstime.com

The Cash Machine Runs Out

By Kṛṣṇa Dharma Dāsa

THE LAST COUPLE of years have not been good ones for the world. First we are told about global food scarcity, then we hear of possible oil shortages, and then—horror of horrors—we run out of money. Surely even the staunchest believers in free-market capitalism must be beginning to wonder how much longer it can last. As bank after bank either folds or gets nationalized, and as more and more ordinary people face the prospect of losing their jobs and homes, the inherent weaknesses in our financial system are starting to show. One major problem of course is greed. Bankers chase fat profits with high-risk gambles that fail. But behind it all lies a deeper issue.



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Perhaps the reaction to this crisis by many investors gives us a clue. When the prices of shares and even oil tumbled, one price went up considerably: gold. Good old gold is something of substance, unlike the pieces of paper that once represented it, or even worse, digital files on a hard drive.

What is real wealth? According to Vedic knowledge, and surely it should be obvious, real opulence means the earth's bounty. Grains, vegetables, fresh water, minerals, jewels, gold, and everything else we need comes from mother earth. Not one single factory has been built that can manufacture even one of these items to provide for human society.

Commenting on the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.8.40), Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, "Human prosperity flourishes by natural gifts and not by gigantic industrial enterprises. The gigantic industrial enterprises are products of a godless civilization, and they cause the destruction of the noble aims of human life. The more we go on increasing such troublesome industries to squeeze out the vital energy of the human being, the more there will be unrest and dissatisfaction of the people in general, although a few only can live lavishly by exploitation."

Now it seems even the lavish livers are finding it hard, although I expect most of them have adequately insured themselves against the present crises. Certainly though, we are squeezing out our vital energy for no profit other than increasing our stress and anxiety levels, with tranquilizers and mood elevators being prescribed and consumed at record levels.

Advice from the Gītā

Although essentially a spiritual treatise, the *Bhagavad-gītā* does offer some material advice. "Grow food," Kṛṣṇa tells us, and He goes on to explain how that is best achieved, describing the cosmic hierarchy that provides our necessities and how we can work in harmony with it. Perhaps unsurprisingly, He doesn't mention huge industrial enterprises, investment banks, and all the other trappings of capitalism.

Growing food may seem like unnecessary advice, but increasingly that is not what we do. More and more it is being left to huge agribusinesses to provide food for the world while the rest of us work in a thousand and one other industries. And then market forces, our friends the financiers again, act to complicate the whole business. As a result we have seen huge amounts of produce dumped into the sea while parts of the world starve.

But while we are seeing headlines about so-called global food shortages, huge swaths of land everywhere could easily be employed to produce our food. Often, though, the insatiable demand for cash steps in, and instead of food, what's being grown are biofuels or other useless crops like tea or coffee, or worse still, livestock feed. And all the while most of us continue to squeeze out our vital energy producing any number of items that, at the end of the day, we really do not need.

Pursuing Noble Aims

And this is Kṛṣṇa's real point, as stated by Śrīla Prabhupāda. We are meant to pursue the "noble aims" of life. These are not to unlimitedly increase technology, equipping ourselves with an array of gadgetry in the misguided belief that it will make us happy. The real aim of life is to get free of worldliness and realize our true spiritual nature, beyond this temporary sphere.

Kṛṣṇa therefore tells us to grow food and get the few basic necessities we require out of the way, then we can concentrate on life's noble aims, the noblest of which is to know Kṛṣṇa Himself, the Supreme Person with whom we have an eternal loving relationship. That knowledge cannot be achieved by any kind of material progress. In fact, the more we become wrapped up in the vain attempt to improve our happiness by material adjustments, by striving for more wealth, then the less we are able to peacefully concentrate on realizing the Absolute Truth.

But it is a long way back to go from our highly industrialized and urbanized society to the kind of simple living and high thinking proposed by the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Before even attempting that, perhaps the first question we should ask is why we moved and are still moving rapidly in the opposite direction. The only answer is that we lost touch with our spirituality. Allured by the promise of spectacular enjoyment proffered by our scientific progress, we turned more and more away from the divine. But now we are seeing the result, in our environment, our society, and our own hearts, which are always hankering for something more, something we never seem to find.

The time is therefore right to follow Kṛṣṇa's and Prabhupāda's advice. Turn back toward the divine. Give up our frantic pursuit of material possessions and find the real treasure that lies within. A treasure that even the worst economic collapses cannot diminish.

Kṛṣṇa Dharma Dāsa is the author of the world's best-selling English editions of the Mahābhārata *and the* Rāmāyaṇa, *and his editions have been translated into twelve other languages. He lives in England.*

Believing vs. Knowing

By Thomas T. Klugh

IN AN ONLINE POLL of around two thousand American adults conducted a few years ago, ninety percent said they believe in God. Another poll revealed that more Protestants believe in God than do Catholics, followed by Jews.

While I don't dispute the results of these polls, I suggest that the question "Do you believe in God?" is itself problematic. In other words, it's not the issue that is in question, but it's the question that's at issue.

Pollsters should be asking, "Do you *know* God?" *Belief* implies something one can't be sure of. We think or hope it exists. *Knowing,* on the other hand, implies a meeting of two entities. We don't believe in the existence of our family members; we know they exist. They're right there in front of us. There's no question of belief when it comes to those in our midst.

Can we really know God as opposed to merely believing in Him? There are those who say we can. His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda is one such saintly person.

Prabhupāda arrived in the US in 1965 after traveling alone, at the age of sixty-nine, aboard a freighter from India. A couple of trunks with clothes, books, a typewriter, a few utensils, a few dollars, and a small bag of dry cereal were his sole possessions. The message he brought with him was that God doesn't have to be some ambiguous entity totally removed from us—as if He were somewhere "out there"—but is in fact a very real eternal person whom we can know right here where we are now.

You may ask why we can't see God if it's true He's right here right now. Prabhupāda's answer was that it's a matter of qualification, and qualification is a matter of desire.

Prabhupāda referred to the process of coming to know God as a science. Just as any scientific endeavor requires that a process be followed, so too with knowing God. It's like this: When we're very young we learned simple numbers and then arithmetic. Later we learned addition and subtraction, then multiplication and division. Later still we learned basic algebra, then intermediate algebra, then geometry and trigonometry. Only then are we able to learn calculus and other higher mathematics.

When it comes to being qualified to know God, we begin like little children. At first, our realizations are like those of a simple-minded child. But as we mature, we learn and realize higher spiritual truths; our knowledge of God progresses.

Consider this analogy: Knowledge of God is like electrical energy, and we're like a light bulb. A twenty-five watt bulb can carry twenty-five watts of energy, and a hundred-watt bulb can carry a hundred watts. Just as each bulb is qualified to receive only a certain amount of energy, we are qualified to understand a certain amount of knowledge about God.

The most important qualification is the desire to know God. As that desire grows, so will our knowledge.

Prabhupāda taught that knowledge of God includes knowledge of His personal form and of His energies. The personal form is an eternally youthful blue boy: Kṛṣṇa.

Kṛṣṇa displays His energies in three primary forms: the internal, the external, and the marginal. The pure spiritual nature is the internal energy, the material world is the external energy, and we spirit souls —the life within all living beings— are the marginal energy. We are referred to as marginal energy because we can exist within either the spiritual or the material world. Impersonal conceptions of God keep us within the material realm, whereas knowledge of God as a person qualifies us to return to the spiritual world.

We can know Kṛṣṇa through His energies, including the material world. One who is qualified can see the personal form of God behind the impersonal material nature.

Kṛṣṇa will allow us to know Him as much as we desire. We can know Him in His personal form, we can know Him as the incredibly bright effulgence emanating from His body, or we can know Him through the dull material energy that's all around us in the form of sky, clouds, mountains, cities, and sidewalks.

We can progress to higher levels of perception. We're on the lower rungs of a ladder. We look up and see more rungs to climb. The rungs seem to go on forever. But all we have to do is take the next step. Step up on the next rung, and then the next, and then the next.

We can be elevated to a higher spiritual level by following the process given in Prabhupāda's teachings. We'll then become qualified to know Kṛṣṇa personally. If we're satisfied with knowing only impersonal aspects of Kṛṣṇa, then that's fine too, but then we shouldn't complain. After all, it's what we asked for.

Thomas Klugh has been studying Kṛṣṇa consciousness for twenty-six years. He has a master's degree from New York University in philosophy of education. He and his wife live in New York City.

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(See "Centers," pages 59–61, or visit directory.krishna.com.)

A Successful Quest

From childhood, she wanted to understand the teachings of God, and He led her to the right place.

By Daivīśakti Devī Dāsī

I WAS FROM the first generation of immigrant survivors of World War II who escaped to America. My father was a religious leader who had to flee his war-torn homeland. After the war, relatives would visit us with numbers tattooed on their forearms from the concentration camps in Eastern Europe. They would describe how they survived the horrors of the war and arrived in America. This all made a deep impression upon me in my childhood, and at age five I decided to enter Hebrew School and complete a religious education up to age fifteen. My goal was to study the Torah in Hebrew to understand God's teachings.

At an early age I realized that the sweetest and most beautiful moments in my life were when we children gathered together at the school and sang ancient songs in loving praise of God in the Hebrew language. I felt no joy greater than this, so it propelled me on in my studies and my hopes to understand the scriptures one day.

That hope was somewhat frustrated as graduation, or confirmation, drew near. I had hardly learned any Hebrew, and we rarely had classes on the holy books. I asked my most respected teacher when we would learn these things, and he soberly replied that I would have to go on to Hebrew College for those studies.

Though disappointed at the time of graduation, I still gratefully received a gift of an English translation of the Torah and began to read it carefully. It was full of ethical and moral codes for humanity, and I was inspired to incorporate them into my teenage life. This alienated me a bit from my friends and classmates, who had little interest in morality or religion. By following the rules of cleanliness and diet, I gradually felt a change in my life. I became steadfast and determined to maintain these rules even if people around me didn't follow them. Following the rules seemed worthwhile because I felt peaceful and safe, as if I were protected by God when I followed His instructions. It also helped me develop an inner personal closeness to God.

College or a Monastery?

By age sixteen it was time to choose where to go to college. I decided to seek the most ancient scriptures known to mankind and study those books in their original language. It seemed that Oriental culture was more ancient than Judaism, so I looked for the best Oriental philosophy colleges in America. I also considered monastic life, so I wrote to some professors for advice on whether to enter a monastery or a college. One professor from Japan sent a hand-written reply saying I should complete college before entering a monastery. On this advice, I chose what seemed the finest university for Oriental studies, the University of Chicago, and was accepted as a student there.

I arrived at the university a week before classes started. I decided to look for an interesting book in their massive bookstore and use that week to read it. After hours of searching I found a most amazing book called *Bhagavad-gītā.* It intrigued me. The translation of its title proclaimed it to be the very "Song of God." I read it and reread it, and realized that this was the knowledge I had been seeking. It had the answers to my questions about life, plus answers to questions I never knew to ask. It taught me how to see God everywhere, and in everything. I was delighted. I realized I had found what I was looking for at the university. I had found *Bhagavad-gītā,* God's original instructions to mankind. Rather than waste another four years of my life on academics, I decided to find people living the principles of *Bhagavad-gītā* and learn more from them.

It was the 60s, and there was a lot of searching going on in America. The epicenter of the counterculture was in California, or at least I believed so. I lived in Pennsylvania and didn't see much happening in that part of the country. So I decided to go to California, hoping to find people practicing *Bhagavad-gītā.* Kṛṣṇa guided me, and there on the corner of Haight and Ashbury streets, devotees were chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. When I saw them I was struck with wonder.

"These people must know something I don't know," I thought, "because they're doing something I would love to do."

I was spellbound by their singing and dancing, but when they came around with a conch shell for collecting donations, I didn't have a single penny to give them, so they passed me by. I was too shy to speak with the young men in robes, and there weren't any young women with them. I returned to my home in Pennsylvania with my *Bhagavad-gītā.*

Sweet Sound in the Street

By this time I was carefully following the instructions on yoga as described in *Bhagavad-gītā,* and living a simple, pure way of life. One beautiful day, while sitting in meditation at Rittenhouse Square in Philadelphia, I heard the sweet sound of singing and hand cymbals. I followed the sound and saw the devotees again. One of them handed me a card imprinted with the *mahā-mantra,* and I stayed to watch them dancing on the street corner. That evening I visited the temple for their *Bhagavad-gītā* class. I attended their next Sunday feast and moved into the temple two days later.

There were only three devotees living in the temple, and they needed a lot of help. In those days we had to learn everything quickly and then become teachers ourselves. We were all just fledgling devotees from diverse backgrounds, but somehow Kṛṣṇa had brought us together in His service. Prabhupāda, our eternal spiritual master and guide, presented the teachings of *Bhagavad-gītā* so perfectly that anyone from any background can become Kṛṣṇa's devotee.

Thus my quest beginning from age five to understand God's teachings was ultimately successful. I found the most ancient scriptures, and I study them now in the original language, Sanskrit. My deepest joy still remains in *saṅkīrtana,* the congregational chanting of God's holy names and glories. I also now understand from practical experience how Kṛṣṇa leads us to Him through the variegated religions of the world. By sincerely abiding by the Supreme Lord's instructions, anyone can attain the perfection of life—love of God.

How to Put BTG in Your Will

After providing for their families and loved ones, subscribers may want to put *Back to Godhead* in their wills, thus helping to assure the long-term future of this work. In the USA, bequests are free of estate tax and can substantially reduce the amount of your assets claimed by the government.* You can give needed support for *Back to Godhead* by simply including the following words in your will: *I give, devise, and bequeath to* Back to Godhead, *18024 NW 112th Blvd., Alachua, FL 32615* (insert amount being given here) *to be used to support* Back to Godhead *and its related activities, including the Krishna.com website.*

A bequest can be a specific dollar amount, a specific piece of property, a percentage of an estate, or all or part of the residue of an estate. You can also name BTG as a contingency beneficiary in the event someone named in your will is no longer living.

It is recommended that a lawyer help in drafting or amending a will.

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*If you live outside the USA, check the estate tax laws for your country.

Hold On!

A message from within and a timely lecture help remove a devotee's doubts about the spiritual value of his job.

By Manish Goel

EVERY MORNING I was dragging my body to the office, and every evening I was crawling back home like an ashamed, beaten serpent. My heart was constantly hammering my mind with the thought that I should quit my job.

I analyzed my work through the lens of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and found it degrading and contrary to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I work for a retail company where I create propositions that entice people to buy more and more. I started feeling that any kind of work is equivalent to contributing to *māyā's* trap of increasing material desires.

"I'm on the path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness to escape the influence of *māyā*, but I'm busy creating material allurements for others." That thought disturbed me constantly.

Then I asked myself, "Is my judgment right? Once I start evaluating different occupations, I can find faults with every kind of work. And if I really want to quit my work, I should go to a village, till some land, rear a cow, and live life practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness. But I don't kill animals or sell liquor. I don't gamble or do

Background photo: © Mark Swallow | istockphoto.com. Framed painting by Muralīdhara Dāsa. Collage by Yamarāja Dāsa

any illegal work. I have a simple job, so what is my problem with this work?” These mixed feelings put my mind in turmoil.

My poor, crooked mind didn’t understand that my consciousness, and not my profession, needs to change. The sun of my confidence had set into the darkness of weak-heartedness, unaware of the ray of hope approaching.

But a voice in my heart said, “Hold on!” and I decided to go to the Sunday feast at the Hare Kṛṣṇa temple in Chowpatty, a section of Mumbai.

Sitting next to Rādhānātha Swami, the temple leader, was a tall man with a strong build and a dark complexion. His name is Devāmṛta Swami, and he was speaking to the audience. He had a calm smile on his face, and he seemed always ready to break out into loud laughter. He did so several times a few minutes later.

I should try to serve the Lord with the work He has provided instead of offering it to the hunger of my own ego.

He started his lecture with the very question burning in my mind: Can we be Kṛṣṇa conscious in the workplace?

Here are some of his points: We have to ask ourselves why we are working. If we work for ourselves, we will never be happy and satisfied. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is about pleasing Kṛṣṇa’s senses. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (3.1) Arjuna asks Kṛṣṇa,

> *jyāyāsī cet karmaṇas te*
> *matā buddhir janārdana*
> *tat kiṁ karmaṇi ghore māṁ*
> *niyojayasi keśava*

“O Janārdana, O Keśava, why do You want to engage me in this ghastly warfare, if You think intelligence is better than fruitive work?” Prabhupāda explains: “Arjuna also thought of Kṛṣṇa consciousness or *buddhi-yoga,* or intelligence in spiritual advancement of knowledge, as something like retirement from active life and the practice of penance and austerity at a secluded place.” But when Kṛṣṇa explained to Arjuna the importance of karma-yoga, Arjuna understood his real dharma, or duty. Kṛṣṇa explained that Arjuna was not fighting for himself but for Kṛṣṇa.

“If Arjuna can give up all his prejudices and fight a big war—which involved killing his loved ones—then each one of us can do our work very peacefully,” Devāmṛta Swami said.

He then said that people might believe that devotees don’t work hard and smart. But if as devotees we discharge our duties well and intelligently, that impresses people, and we become brand ambassadors of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

“If we develop an attitude of offering everything to Kṛṣṇa,” he said, “then Kṛṣṇa gives us intelligence and we perform our duties perfectly.”

Questions Answered

I hadn’t asked him the questions that were tormenting me, but he answered them all. A new sun dawned in my consciousness, and his words were like a ray of hope. I now knew why I was never happy and content in my work: I was working only for the satisfaction of my own senses and ego.

I had become so attached to my work that it had become my identity and I had left behind the real quest for my true identity. I had forgotten that I should try to serve the Lord with the work He has provided instead of offering it to the hunger of my own ego. Now I understand that since I am not doing any work that violates the basic religious principles—no intoxication, no meat-eating, no illicit sex, and no gambling—I should focus on my work and be honest in my duties.

From Devāmṛta Swami’s lecture I understood that every act of a devotee should be an offering to Kṛṣṇa. A devotee should try to work for Kṛṣṇa’s sense gratification, and thus should feel obliged to work. We should understand that just to be identified as a servant of Kṛṣṇa is a wholesome individuality. This point helped me understand that each of my acts is a means to serve Kṛṣṇa.

A Milestone

The lecture was an important milestone in my journey in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Since then, my moroseness has gone away and I am excited to go to work. In fact, I try to perfect my work because now I believe it’s one of the ways to please Kṛṣṇa.

At times I still forget and get carried away with the flight of my ego. So I’ve placed a reminder on my office desk: “Remember, everything is an offering to Kṛṣṇa.”

I don’t want this truth to go away from my mind. I want it to stay with me forever to keep reminding me of my true identity: servant of Kṛṣṇa. Like a true devotee, I want to be always in the trance of the service attitude. I want to please the object of my service, Lord Kṛṣṇa. Then, as He did through Devāmṛta Swami’s lecture, Kṛṣṇa will answer all my doubts. To keep my faith intact, I need to be patient and listen to the calling of my heart when it says, “Hold on!”

Manish Goel, age twenty-seven and unmarried, lives at the Bhaktivedanta Academy for Cultural Education. Connected with ISKCON Chowpatty, the Academy provides housing and spiritual training for working men practicing devotional service.

CALENDAR

This calendar is calculated for Māyāpur, West Bengal, India. The dates, derived from a lunar calendar, may vary by one day for other locations. For the exact dates for your area, go to ***www.krishnadays.com****.*

Because the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement comes in disciplic line from Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the calendar includes not only dates relevant to all followers of the Vedic tradition but also dates relating to Lord Caitanya's associates and prominent spiritual masters in His disciplic succession.

March 1–March 30

(*Month of Viṣṇu*)

MARCH

8—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita, one of Lord Caitanya's principal associates.

11—Pāpamocanī Ekādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans.

21—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Rāmānujācārya, a Vaiṣṇava philosopher and spiritual master who appeared in the eleventh century.

24—Śrī Rāma Navamī, the appearance anniversary of Lord Rāmacandra. Fasting till sunset, followed by feasting.

26—Kāmadā Ekādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans.

30—Śrī Kṛṣṇa Vasanta Rāsa, Lord Kṛṣṇa's springtime *rāsa* dance. Balarāma Rāsa Yātrā, Lord Balarāma's *rāsa* dance. Appearance anniversary of Hanumānjī, eternal servant of Lord Rāma. Appearance anniversary of Śyāmānanda Paṇḍita, a follower of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

March 31–April 14, May 15–27

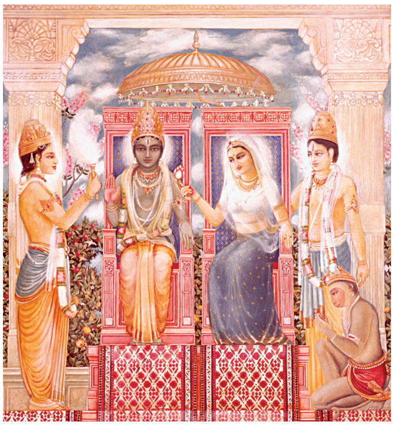
(*Month of Madhusūdana*)

[This year, this month is divided in two by the month of Puruṣottama.]

APRIL

9—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Vṛndāvana Dāsa Ṭhākura, author of *Śrī Caitanya-Bhāgavata,* a biography on Lord Caitanya.

10—Varūthinī Ekādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans.



Lord Rāma and Śrīmatī Sītā Devī

Painting by Jaya Rāma Dāsa

14—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Gadādhara Paṇḍita, one of Lord Caitanya's principal associates.

April 15–May 14

(*Month of Puruṣottama*)

25—Padminī Ekādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans.

MAY

10—Vañjulī Mahā-dvādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans for Paramā Ekādaśī.

Month of Madhusūdana (continued)

16—Beginning of Candana Yātrā, the festival of anointing the temple deity with sandalwood pulp for twenty-one days.

22—Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Sītā Devī, the consort of Lord Rāmacandra. Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Jāhnavā Devī, the consort of Lord Nityānanda. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Madhu Paṇḍita, a great devotee of Lord Caitanya.

24—Mohinī Ekādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans.

25—Rukmiṇī Dvādaśī, the appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Rukmiṇī Devī, the consort of Lord Kṛṣṇa as Dvārakādhīśa, the Lord of Dvārakā.

26—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Jayānanda Prabhu, a dedicated disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda who helped him bring Rathayātrā to the Western world.

27—Nṛsiṁha Caturdaśī, appearance anniversary of Lord Nṛsiṁhadeva, Lord Kṛṣṇa's half-man, half-lion incarnation. Fasting till dusk, followed by feasting. Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, a follower of the six Gosvāmīs. Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Mādhavendra Purī, the spiritual master of Lord Caitanya's spiritual master (Īśvara Purī).

May 28–June 26

(*Month of Trivikrama*)

JUNE

2—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Rāmānanda Rāya, an intimate associate of Lord Caitanya.

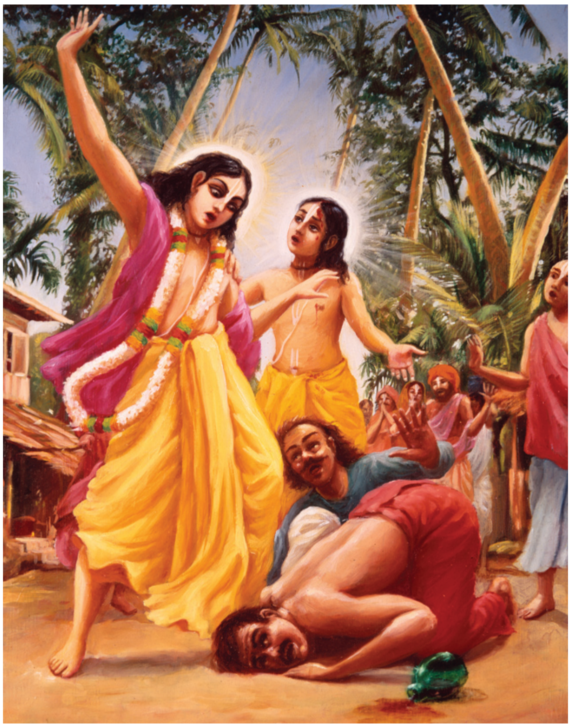
8—Aparā Ekādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans.

In your own

Which devotee in Lord Caitanya's pastimes inspires you the most, and why?

Recently, Lord Nityānanda's compassion for Jagāi and Mādhāi inspired me. I am a state prisoner. While at the prison temple for worship, thieves broke into my locker and stole writing supplies, hygiene items, and a bag of *prasādam* candy. Before I became Kṛṣṇa conscious I would have sought to do the thieves great bodily harm.

Jagāi and Mādhāi, two thieving rascals, hit Prabhu Nityānanda with an earthen pot. Lord Caitanya, outraged, advanced to kill the thieves. Nityānanda interceded, requesting Caitanya to have mercy on them. Caitanya, God Himself, fulfilled Nityānanda's desire. As a result, Jagāi and Mādhāi surrendered to God and became great devotees.


Painting by Yadurāṇī Devī Dāsī

In an outstanding display of mercy, Lord Nityānanda protects the violent offenders Jagāi and Mādhāi from the righteous anger of Lord Caitanya.

Inspired by Nityānanda's compassionate example, I can easily tolerate the thieves' offense. Ironically, they unwittingly stole God's mercy (*prasādam*). Now I can show thieves compassion by preaching to them about the mercy of God.

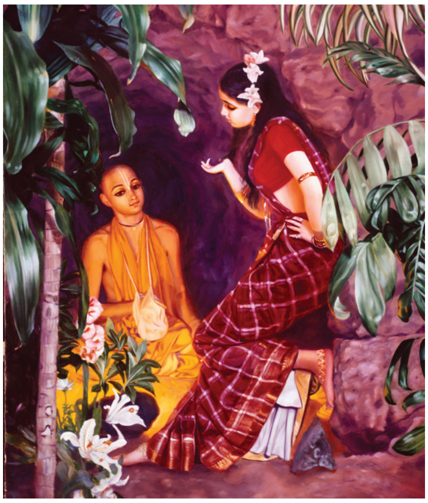
Gerald Niles
Daytona Beach, Florida

There are ample great devotees in the pastimes of Lord Caitanya, but Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī inspires me the most. We may all make progress in our spiritual lives by following in his footsteps. This great soul was so humble. After receiving the divine mercy of Lord Caitanya, he would chant and do *bhajana* all day long. He used to clean and eat food that even cows rejected. I am inspired by his humility. If I need some guidance in spiritual life, looking at his character will always help me.

Nimai Patel
Palm Beach, Florida

Lord Nityānanda is inspirational in showing us how to love Kṛṣṇa and how to love others even if they do not reciprocate in the same way. The example of Jagāi and Mādhāi comes to mind. Even though they cut Lord Nityānanda, He still felt compassion towards them, and even when Lord Caitanya was about to punish them, He asked for them to be forgiven. What an amazing personality—best friend to the Lord, compassionate, humble, merciful, loyal, full of joy, and most importantly, completely devoted to Lord Caitanya. These are all qualities I aspire to. Lord Nityānanda *kī jaya*!

Jagannātha Kīrtanānanda Dāsa
Birmingham, United Kingdom


Painting by Yadurāṇī Devī Dāsī

Even Māyādevī, the illusory energy herself, cannot lure the great devotee HaridāsaṬhākura.

For his firm faith and determination to chant the holy names of the Lord in any condition, Haridāsa Ṭhākura inspires me the most. He was beaten in twenty-two marketplaces, but still he would not give up chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.

When tested by a prostitute in the dead of night, he was so fixed in his meditation on the holy names that he simply told her to sit down and wait until he had finished his chanting. By then it was morning. She came again and again, and by hearing the holy names she became purified and dedicated her life to chanting the *mahā-mantra.*

Later, when he lived in Jagannatha Puri, he would not enter the temple but instead paid obeisances from a distance and Mahāprabhu would visit him daily.

Gaurāṅga Dāsī
Baltimore, Maryland

words . . .

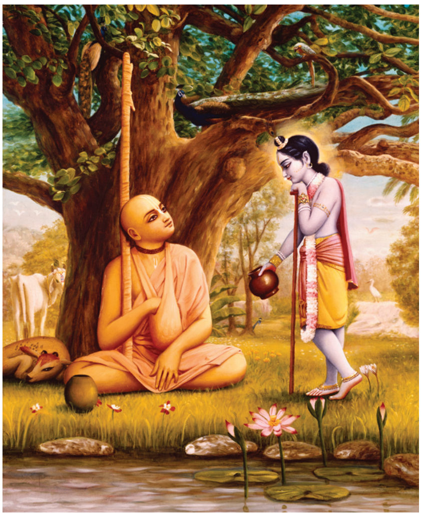
Pentip photo: Andrea Leone | Agency: Dreamstime.com

Śrīla Mādhavendra Purī Gosvāmī

is not one of Lord Caitanya's contemporaries, but he is very much part of the Lord's pastimes. He introduced within the Vaiṣṇava world the mood of separation in the relationship between the individual soul and the Supreme Soul. This mood is a prominent feature of Lord Caitanya's theology. Mādhavendra Purī Gosvāmī was the spiritual master of Lord Śrī Caitanya's own guru, Īśvara Purī.

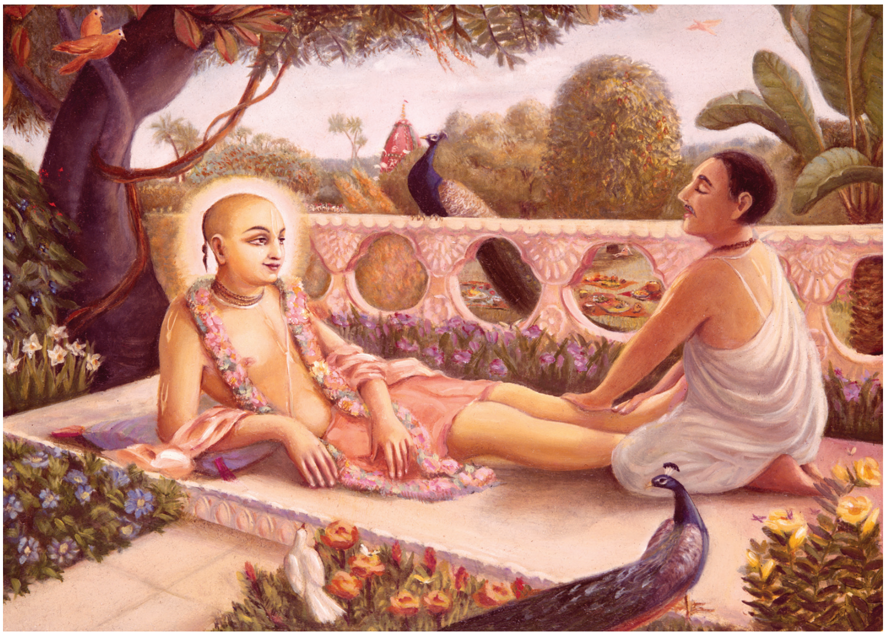
Mādhavendra Purī belonged to a line of very strict renunciants who take specific vows of austerity to curb the demands of the mind and senses. Mādhavendra Purī had vowed to not eat anything not offered to him without his asking. If no food was offered to him, he would simply fast and occupy his time in chanting the Lord's holy name or engaging in other devotional activities. Once Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself, in the guise of an ordinary cowherd boy, came to Mādhavendra Purī and offered him a pot of milk.

Mādhavendra Purī Dāsa
Paris, France



Painting by Yadurāṇī Devī Dāsī

Lord Kṛṣṇa delivers milk to His devotee Mādhavendra Purī, who has vowed to eat only what is offered to him without his request.



Painting by Jāhnava Devī Dāsī

After a long wait, King Pratāparudra finally meets Lord Caitanya during an interlude of the Rathayātrā festival.

Rāghava Paṇḍita: I am reminded of him whenever

I make daily *bhoga* [food] offerings to the Lord. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu described Rāghava Paṇḍita's devotional service as being supremely pure and highly accomplished.

For Lord Kṛṣṇa's pleasure, Rāghava Paṇḍita would buy famously sweet coconuts from a distant place, paying sixteen times the local price. He once threw away ten of these expensive coconuts because the servant who brought them had touched them with dirty hands.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu praised Rāghava Paṇḍita's devotional service as being pure and unalloyed. In the case of Rāghava Paṇḍita, Kṛṣṇa would factually drink the coconut juice and eat the pulp that was offered to Him. Rāghava Paṇḍita *kī jaya*!

Vaikuṇṭheśvara Bālājī Dāsa
(V. Mistry)
Austin, Texas

Anything can be accepted in life,

but not neglect. One associate of Lord Caitanya had to suffer the Lord's neglect for quite a long period. He was a great devotee and a ruler, King Pratāparudra. While he was constantly being rejected by the Lord, he never lost hope, never gave up, never got frustrated; rather, he was enthusiastically waiting for every opportunity to serve the Lord and His associates.

HERE'S THE NEXT QUESTION:

What are some of the things you do to nurture Kṛṣṇa consciousness in your children?

Go to Krishna.com/inyourownwords and let us know. Please keep your answer to under 150 words. Replies will appear in our Jul/Aug 2010 issue. Deadline for submissions is Apr 15.

To get the Lord's audience, he was even ready to resign his position as king. He was so determined. When Rāmānanda Rāya came to ask him permission to retire as governor of Madras to join Lord Caitanya in Puri, the king didn't get angry. He blissfully accepted the resignation. Sincere devotees never lose; they always win, maybe with a little delay. Finally Pratāparudra Mahārāja got the mercy of Lord Caitanya during the Rathayātrā festival.

Hari Caitanya Dāsa
Mumbai, India

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Nāmācārya Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura's words

and deeds are inspiring for any devotee. He took to chanting the holy names of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and dedicated his life for spreading the holy names. What can be more pleasing to the Lord? He even transformed a prostitute and inspired her to chant 300,000 names daily, as he himself was doing. Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura is truly inspiring for me.

Vishal Joglekar
Mumbai, India

I am most inspired

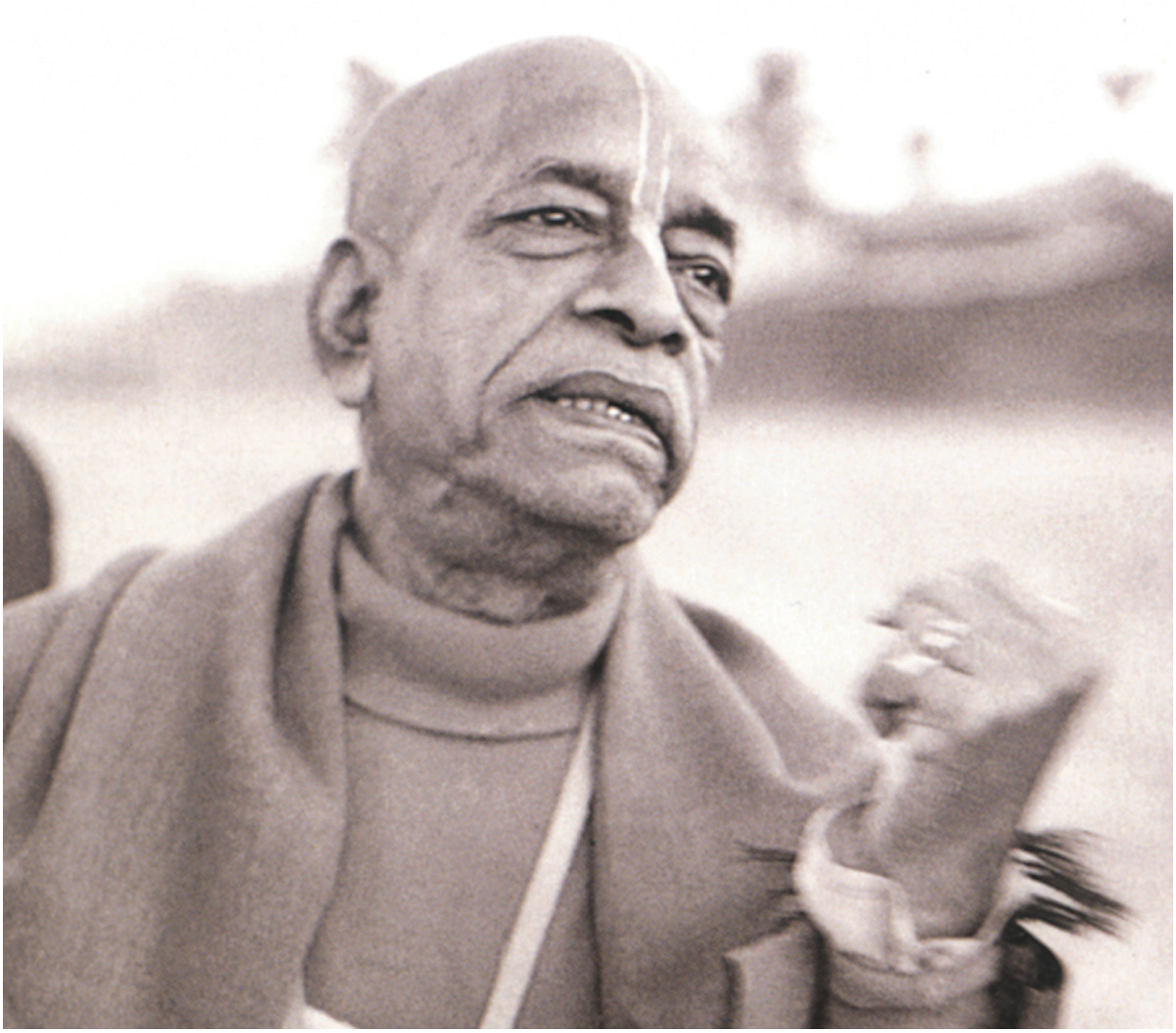
by the humble nature of Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura, his deep devotion for Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and his deep desire to please the Lord by chanting 192 rounds of *japa* every day. He was blessed to taste the nectars of the holy names and relish them within his heart. What inspires me further is his humble, tolerant, and forgiving nature towards other living beings, even those inimical towards him.

When the servants of the envious king beat Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura in twenty-two marketplaces, he simply took shelter of the holy names. In that pure mood of total surrender to the Supreme Lord, he was thinking that he was liable to be punished even more, and he was praying to the Lord to pardon the people who were beating him so severely. My realization from this pastime is that chanting is so powerful that it attracts the Lord and He comes to help us face our obstacles in spiritual life. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu Himself protected Haridāsa Ṭhākura's body when someone was trying to cause him pain.

Nāmācārya Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura *kī jaya*! ❁

Rukmiṇī Prītī Devī Dāsī
Adliya, Bahrain

The Standard for a Leader



The following conversation between His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and some of his disciples took place on an early-morning walk in December 1973 at Venice Beach, California.

Disciple: Śrīla Prabhupāda, sometimes we argue that although the laws of nature are very powerful, we can overcome such things as disease and death if we surrender to Lord Kṛṣṇa, since He is controlling nature. But skeptics say we can gradually come to control the laws of nature on our own, without God.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, we are forced to accept the laws of nature. How can anyone say he has conquered the laws of nature?

Disciple: Well, the doctors and biologists have conquered so many diseases.

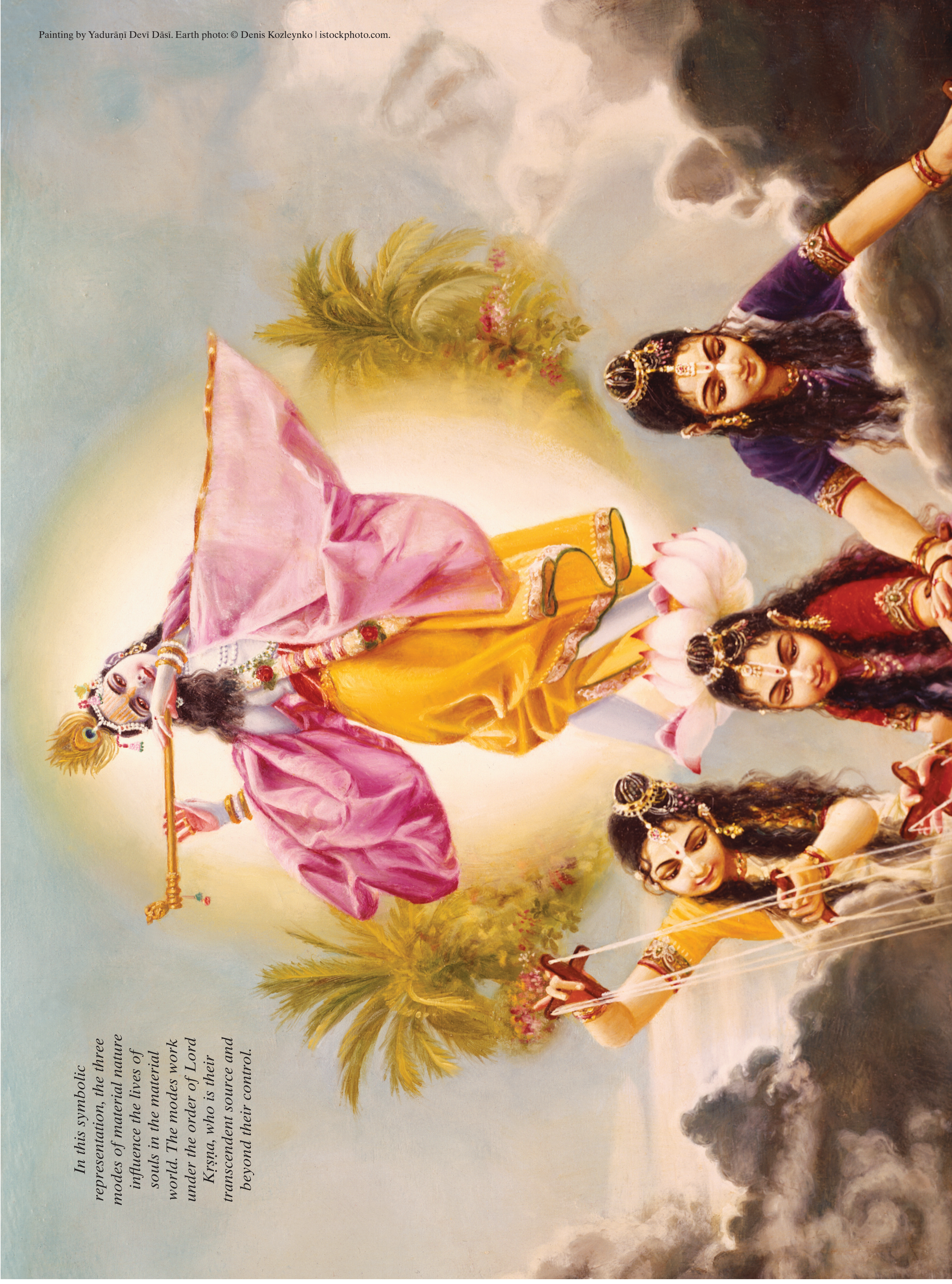
Śrīla Prabhupāda: But people are still becoming diseased. How have the doctors stopped disease?

Disciple: In Africa and India, for instance, they are inoculating everyone against smallpox, and they've saved many thousands of children from dying.

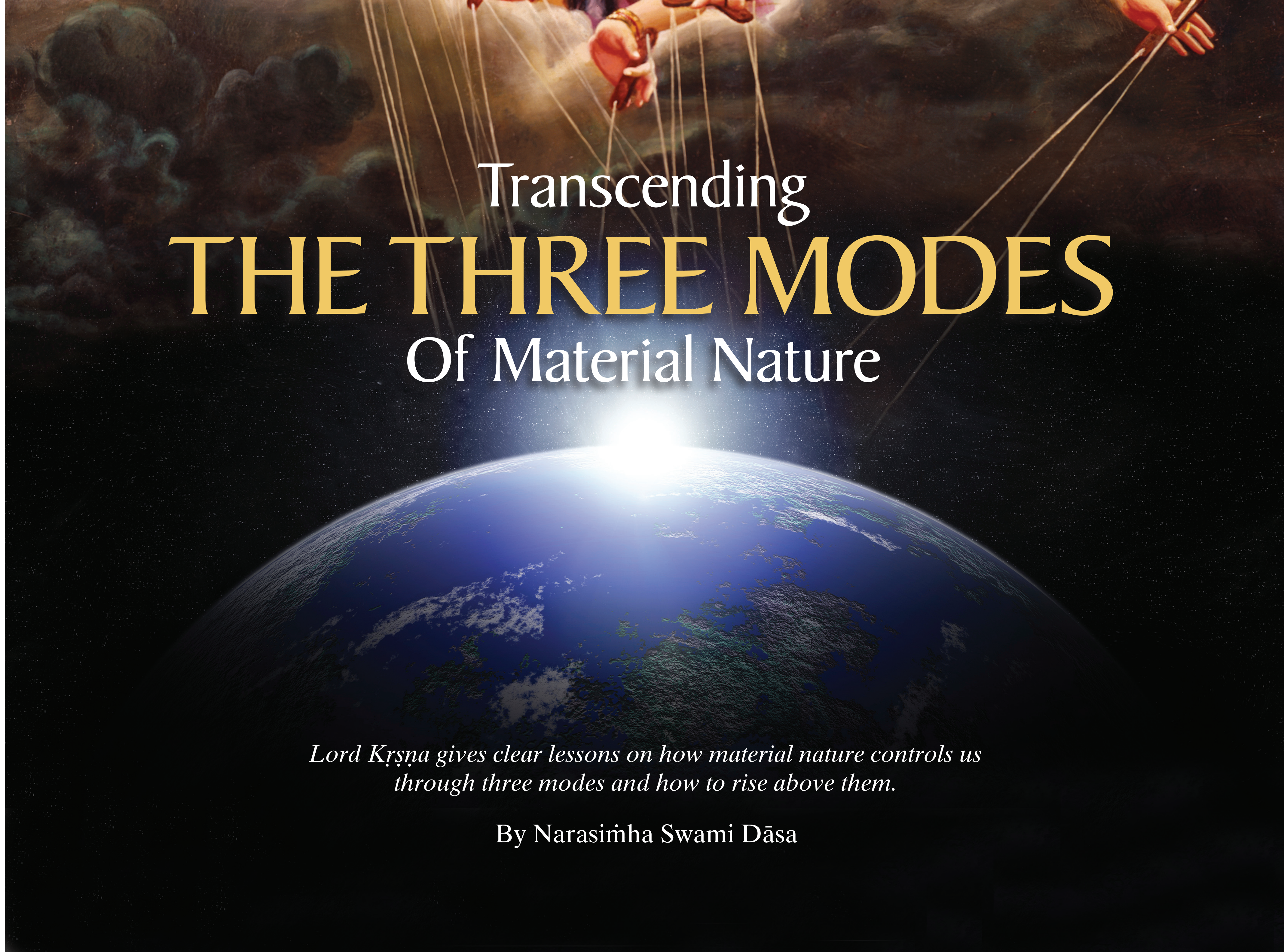
Śrīla Prabhupāda: But the children will grow up and get old and die eventually in any case. So death has

(*please turn to page 38*)

Painting by Yadurāṇī Devī Dāsī. Earth photo: © Denis Kozleynko | istockphoto.com.



In this symbolic representation, the three modes of material nature influence the lives of souls in the material world. The modes work under the order of Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is their transcendent source and beyond their control.



Transcending THE THREE MODES Of Material Nature

Lord Kṛṣṇa gives clear lessons on how material nature controls us through three modes and how to rise above them.

By Narasiṁha Swami Dāsa

THE SUBJECT of the three modes of material nature is of great importance to souls who have taken birth in the material world because of envying God. In the fourteenth chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā,* Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead (the perfect spiritual master) instructs Arjuna (the perfect disciple) on the characteristics of the three modes of material nature: goodness, passion, and ignorance. Lord Kṛṣṇa's instructions include directions on how to transcend the three material modes and enter the spiritual realm.

In his commentary on the beginning verses of this chapter, Śrīla Prabhupāda explains that the living entity, the spirit soul, is entangled in the material world because of association with the three modes of material nature. While the modes contaminate material knowledge, uncontaminated transcendental knowledge is available. By understanding transcendental knowledge, great sages have attained perfection and the spiritual world. Mere academic knowledge does not free one from the modes. One must acquire transcendental knowledge.

Goodness

In text 14.6 Lord Kṛṣṇa says,

tatra sattvam nirmalatvāt
prakāśakam anāmayam
sukha-saṅgena badhnāti
jñāna-saṅgena cānagha

"O sinless one, the mode of goodness, being purer than the others, is illuminating, and it frees one from all sinful reactions. Those situated in that mode become conditioned by a sense of happiness and knowledge." The mode of goodness makes us wiser than others and enriches us with material knowledge. This knowledge makes us feel superior and conditions us to believe the illusion that life is pleasant. Śrīla Prabhupāda says that as long as we are attracted to working in this mode, we have to take some type of body under the modes of nature and remain bound to the material world and repeated birth and death.

In text 14.11 Śrī Kṛṣṇa says,

sarva-dvāreṣu dehe 'smin
prakāśa upajāyate
jñānaṁ yadā tadā vidyād
vivṛddhaṁ sattvam ity uta

"The manifestations of the mode of goodness can be experienced when all the gates of the body are illuminated by knowledge." The nine gates of the body—two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, the mouth, the genital, and the anus—are said to be illuminated when a person's behavior is in the mode of goodness. In the practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the devotee engages all the gates—the whole body—to reach the state of pure goodness. For example, the devotee uses the eyes and ears to read and hear the scriptures, the nostrils to smell flowers offered to the Lord, and the mouth to taste food offered to the Lord and to chant the *mahā-mantra:* Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. Chanting and following the four regulative principles—no meat-eating, illicit sex, intoxication, or gambling—gradually take a devotee to the mode of goodness and then to transcendence.

DO YOU LIVE
FAR FROM A TEMPLE?

There may be Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees near you who hold regular get-togethers or want to start them. We don't have room for these gatherings on the Centers list we print in the magazine, but our online list includes many of them. To find out if there's a regular Kṛṣṇa conscious program near you, or to list your own, log on to Krishna.com and click on "Address List" on the home page.

Passion

Regarding the mode of passion, Śrī Kṛṣṇa says in text 14.7,

rajo rāgātmakaṁ viddhi
tṛṣṇā-saṅga-samudbhavam
tan nibadhnāti kaunteya
karma-saṅgena dehinam

"The mode of passion is born of unlimited desires and longings, O son of Kunti, and because of this the embodied living entity is bound to material fruitive actions." The mode of passion gives rise to various kinds of sense gratification, such as sexual attraction, excessive attachment to family, society, and country, and constant engagement in fruitive action. All sense gratification results in karmic reactions and consequently repeated birth and death. Hankering for enjoyment and working hard for it are the traits of a person in this mode.

Sense gratification includes competing and working hard for fame and honor. Passionate struggles in any field of life impede progress toward liberation. Thus the mode of passion binds one to the material world.

Ignorance

Regarding the mode of ignorance, Śrī Kṛṣṇa says in text 14.8,

tamas tv ajñāna-jaṁ viddhi
mohanaṁ sarva-dehinām

pramādālasya-nidrābhis
tan nibadhnāti bhārata

"O son of Bharata, know that the mode of darkness, born of ignorance, is the delusion of all embodied living entities. The results of this mode are madness, indolence, and sleep, which bind the conditioned soul." A person in this mode is lazy and mad, has no chance of liberation, and is uninterested in spiritual life. This mode degrades people and leads to atheism, intoxication, and birth in the lowest forms of life.

In text 14.10 Lord Kṛṣṇa says,

rajas tamaś cābhibhūya
sattvaṁ bhavati bhārata
rajaḥ sattvaṁ tamaś caiva
tamaḥ sattvaṁ rajas tathā

"Sometimes the mode of goodness becomes prominent, defeating the modes of passion and ignorance, O son of Bharata. Sometimes the mode of passion defeats goodness and ignorance, and at other times ignorance defeats goodness and passion. In this way there is always competition for supremacy." The three modes of material nature are present in mixed proportions in a human being, and one may predominate.

Freedom from the Modes

A devotee keen on advancing in Kṛṣṇa consciousness has to transcend the three modes. Lord Kṛṣṇa says that a person who dies in the mode of goodness goes to the higher planets of the great sages, a person who dies in the mode of passion is born among those engaged in fruitive activities, and a person who dies in the mode of ignorance is born in the animal kingdom. A devotee has no desire to go to these destinations but wants to go back home, back to Godhead. A *sādhaka,* or practicing devotee, desires to transcend the three modes by the constant practice of devotional service under the guidance of a bona fide spiritual master in the guru-disciple system (*paramparā*).

After hearing all about the three modes, in text 14.21 Arjuna asks three questions important for devotees who want to transcend the modes: "Arjuna inquired: O my dear Lord, by which symptoms is one known who is transcendental to these three modes? What is his behavior? And how does he transcend the modes of nature?"

Lord Kṛṣṇa's answers to these three questions, in texts 22–25, form the complete philosophy of how one can transcend the modes of material nature and return to the spiritual world. Śrīla Prabhupāda expertly summarizes this philosophy in his commentary. Transcendentally situated persons have no envy and do not hanker for anything. They perform their duty in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, indifferent to honor and dishonor. They have nothing to do with material existence. Social and political issues do not affect them. They do nothing for their own sake and everything for Kṛṣṇa.

Lord Kṛṣṇa's answers to three questions form the complete philosophy of how one can transcend the modes of material nature.

Lord Kṛṣṇa answers Arjuna's third question (how one transcends the modes of nature) in text 14.26: "One who engages in full devotional service, unfailing in all circumstances, at once transcends the modes of material nature and thus comes to the level of Brahman." To rise above the three modes of material nature, we have to transfer our consciousness from the influence of the material modes to Kṛṣṇa consciousness by practicing *bhakti-yoga.* A devotee in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not in association with the modes, is without false ego, and serves with great determination and enthusiasm, unwavering in success or failure. The influence of the modes vanishes when a devotee completely surrenders to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Commenting on text 14.26, Śrīla Prabhupāda recommends, "One should not be disturbed by the activities of the modes of nature; instead of putting his consciousness into such activities, he may transfer his consciousness to Kṛṣṇa activities. Kṛṣṇa activities are known as *bhakti-yoga*—always acting for Kṛṣṇa." Commenting on text 14.27, the final text of the chapter, Śrīla Prabhupāda summarizes Kṛṣṇa conscious activities:

> One should always engage in the service of the Lord, should eat the remnants of foodstuffs offered to the deity, smell the flowers offered to the lotus feet of the Lord, see the places where the Lord had His transcendental pastimes, read of the different activities of the Lord, His reciprocation of love with His devotees, chant always the transcendental vibration Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare, and observe the fasting days commemorating the appearances and disappearances of the Lord and His devotees. By following such a process one becomes completely detached from all material activities.

Narasiṁha Swami Dāsa (Dr. S.G.N. Swamy), a disciple of His Holiness Jayapatāka Swami, holds a Ph.D. in engineering management. He served at ISKCON Jakarta for about sixteen years. For the past ten years he has been serving at the ISKCON Sri Jagannath Mandir in Bangalore, where he lives with his wife, Vatsala Rādhā Devī Dāsī.

A LEADER

(*continued from page 33*)

not been stopped. And besides, why do they bother about these children? They don't want overpopulation, so logically the doctors should let them die. But the doctors are illogical. On one side they want to check the death of children, and on the other side they recommend the use of contraceptives and kill the children in the womb by abortion. Why? Why are they killing? To check the increase in population. Then when children are dying in another part of the world, why are they anxious to save them?

The people have to be educated to choose a leader who is God conscious, who is actually fit to be a leader.

Disciple: Once the child is born, they want to save him. But when the child is still in the womb they feel they can kill him. They say he is not yet a human being.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: But the child is already born as soon as a woman becomes pregnant. Pregnancy means the child is already born. How can they say there is no child? What is this nonsense? When a woman is pregnant, why do we say she is "with child"? This means the child is already born. Therefore, I say this abortion business is simply rascaldom.

Disciple: Well, they've rationalized it.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: How?

Disciple: Sometimes they say they're just doing what they feel is best. And of course they deny that there's any such thing as karma to punish them later. It seems like they have a kind of "rabbit philosophy." When a rabbit closes his eyes so he doesn't see the wolf bearing down on him, he may actually think he's safe.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: So, the abortionists believe in rabbit philosophy. It is not a man's philosophy. It is rabbit's philosophy, frog's philosophy, ass's philosophy. And they have been described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.3.19): *śva-viḍ-varāhoṣṭra-kharaiḥ saṁstutaḥ puruṣaḥ paśuḥ*. The leaders, who often support abortion, are rascals, and they are glorified by another set of rascals and fools—the people in general. Because the whole population is made up of rascals, they elect a rascal as their leader. Then, being dissatisfied, they throw the first rascal out of office and elect another rascal. This is called *punaḥ punaś carvita-carvaṇānām:* chewing the chewed. The people do not know whom to elect. Therefore they have to be educated to choose a leader who is God conscious, who is actually fit to be a leader. Then they will be happy. Otherwise, they will go on electing one rascal and rejecting him, electing another rascal and rejecting him, and so on.

In America there is a slogan "In God we trust." So, we don't say, "Elect me President." We simply say that the standard for a leader should be that he knows who God is and that he trusts in Him. And if people actually want to know who God is, they can read *Bhagavad-gītā.* They should read it with intelligence and try to understand, and then for further progress they may study *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.* It is not that we are theorizing. We are taking our information about God from authorized books.

Disciple: In our leaflet about politics, we list the qualifications of a leader. First we say he must follow the four regulative principles: no meat-eating, no illicit sex, no gambling, and no indulging in intoxicants. And the one positive injunction we give is that the leader chant the holy name of the Lord. But someone might argue that these requirements violate the constitutional principle of separation of church and state.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: If you believe in God, why should you have any objection to chanting the holy name of God? If you say, "In God we trust," then you must know the name of God and the address of God. Then you can actually trust Him. And if you don't know these things, then learn them from us. We are giving you God's name, address, qualities—everything. And if you say there is no God, then what is the meaning of "In God we trust"?

Disciple: They have made propaganda to separate church and state, but they've also separated God and country.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Those who are making this propaganda do not understand what God is. God cannot be separated from anything, because everything is God (*mayā tatam idaṁ sarvam*). If they study the *Bhagavad-gītā* they will understand that God is present everywhere. It is not possible to separate anything from Him. Just as your consciousness is present in every part of your body, so the supreme consciousness, God, is present everywhere in the universe. Kṛṣṇa says, *vedāhaṁ samatītāni:* "I know everything that has happened." Unless He is everywhere, how can He know everything? What do you say?

Disciple: This is logical, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: How can you separate God from the government? You may reject any so-called church, any so-called religion that agrees, "Yes, God and the state should be separate." And that is God's instruction—that we reject such so-called religions. *Sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja:* "Give up all kinds of so-called religion and simply surrender to Me," Kṛṣṇa says in *Bhagavad-gītā.* People may say they believe in God, but you can know they are ignorant of what God is when they try to separate God from government.

BOOK SECTION: ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM

Referred to as “the ripe fruit of the tree of Vedic literature,” *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the most complete and authoritative exposition of Vedic knowledge. Five thousand years ago the great sage Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa composed this *purāṇa,* or history, to explain the essence of spiritual knowledge. Here we present *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in serialized form, with the original Sanskrit text, transliteration, word meanings, translation, and purports by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

BENEFITS OF DEVOTIONAL SERVICE

Dhruva Mahārāja continues to offer prayers to Lord Viṣṇu, who is present before Him.

CANTO 4: CHAPTER 9

13 तिर्यङ्नगद्विजसरीसृपदेवदैत्य-
मर्त्यादिभिः परिचितं सदसद्विशेषम्
रूपं स्थविष्ठमज ते महदाद्यनेकं
नातः परं परम वेद्मि न यत्र वादः

tiryaṅ-naga-dvija-sarīsṛpa-deva-daitya-
martyādibhiḥ paricitaṁ sad-asad-viśeṣam
rūpaṁ sthaviṣṭham aja te mahad-ādy-anekaṁ
nātaḥ paraṁ parama vedmi na yatra vādaḥ

tiryak—by animals; *naga*—trees; *dvija*—birds; *sarīsrpa*—reptiles; *deva*—demigods; *daitya*—demons; *martya-ādibhiḥ*—by men, etc.; *paricitam*—pervaded; *sat-asat-viśeṣam*—with varieties manifest and unmanifest; *rūpam*—form; *sthaviṣṭham*—gross universal; *aja*—O Unborn; *te*—Your; *mahat-ādi*—caused by the total material energy, etc.; *anekam*—various causes; *na*—not; *ataḥ*—from this; *param*—transcendental; *parama*—O Supreme; *vedmi*—I know; *na*—not; *yatra*—where; *vādaḥ*—various arguments.

My dear Lord, O Supreme Unborn, I know that the different varieties of living entities, such as animals, trees, birds, reptiles, demigods, and human beings, are spread throughout the universe, which is caused by the total material energy, and I know that they are sometimes manifest and sometimes unmanifest; but I have never experienced the supreme form I behold as I see You now. Now all kinds of methods of theorizing have come to an end.

PURPORT: In the *Bhagavad-gītā* the Lord says that He has spread Himself throughout the universe, but although everything is resting upon Him, He is aloof. The same concept is expressed here by Dhruva Mahārāja. He states that before seeing the transcendental form of the Lord, he had experienced only the varieties of material forms, which are counted at 8,400,000 species of aquatics, birds, beasts, etc. ① The fact is that unless one engages in the devotional service of the Lord, it is impossible to understand the ultimate form of the Lord. This is also confirmed in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.55). *Bhaktyā mām abhijānāti:* factual understanding of the Absolute Truth,

(1) What is required in order for one to understand the ultimate form of the Lord?

who is the Supreme Person, cannot be obtained by any process other than devotional service.

Dhruva Mahārāja here compares his previous state of understanding with the perfection of understanding in the presence of the Supreme Lord. The position of a living entity is to render service; unless he comes to the stage of appreciating the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he engages in the service of the various forms of trees, reptiles, animals, men, demigods, etc. One can experience that one man engages in the service of a dog, another serves plants and creepers, another the demigods, and another humanity, or his boss in the office—but no one is engaged in the service of Kṛṣṇa.

Aside from common men, even men who are elevated in terms of spiritual understanding are at the utmost engaged in the service of the *virāṭ-rūpa,* or, unable to understand the ultimate form of the Lord, they worship voidism by meditation. Dhruva Mahārāja, however, had been blessed by the Supreme Lord. When the Lord touched His conchshell to Dhruva's forehead, real knowledge was revealed from within, and Dhruva could understand the Lord's transcendental form. Dhruva Mahārāja here admits that not only was he ignorant, but by years he was only a child. ② It would not have been possible for an ignorant child to appreciate the supreme form of the Lord had he not been blessed by the Lord, who had touched His conchshell to Dhruva's forehead.

14 कल्पान्त एतदखिलं जठरेण गृह्णन्
शेते पुमान् स्वदृगनन्तसखस्तदङ्के
यन्नाभिसिन्धुरुहकाञ्चनलोकपद्म-
गर्भे द्युमान् भगवते प्रणतोऽस्मि तस्मै

kalpānta etad akhilaṁ jaṭhareṇa gṛhṇan
śete pumān sva-dṛg ananta-sakhas tad-aṅke
yan-nābhi-sindhu-ruha-kāñcana-loka-padma-
garbhe dyumān bhagavate praṇato 'smi tasmai

kalpa-ante—at the end of the millennium; *etat*—this universe; *akhilam*—all; *jaṭhareṇa*—within the belly; *gṛhṇan*—withdrawing; *śete*—lies down; *pumān*—the Supreme Person; *sva-dṛk*—looking upon Himself; *ananta*—the unlimited being Śeṣa; *sakhaḥ*—accompanied by; *tat-aṅke*—on His lap; *yat*—from whose; *nābhi*—navel; *sindhu*—ocean; *ruha*—sprouted; *kāñcana*—golden; *loka*—planet; *padma*—of the lotus; *garbhe*—on the whorl; *dyumān*—Lord Brahmā; *bhagavate*—unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *praṇataḥ*—offering obeisances; *asmi*—I am; *tasmai*—unto Him.

(2) To what does Dhruva Mahārāja credit his ability to appreciate the supreme form of the Lord?
(3) What happens at the end of every millennium, when all the material worlds are dissolved?
(4) What happens to persons inexperienced in the Absolute Truth who are reluctant to accept authority?
(5) How does a devotee like Dhruva Mahārāja know all the manifestations of the Lord?

My dear Lord, at the end of each millennium the Supreme Personality of Godhead Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu dissolves everything manifested within the universe into His belly. He lies down on the lap of Śeṣa Nāga, from His navel sprouts a golden lotus flower on a stem, and on that lotus Lord Brahmā is created. I can understand that You are the same Supreme Godhead. I therefore offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

PURPORT: Dhruva Mahārāja's understanding of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is complete. In the *Vedas* it is said, *yasmin vijñāte sarvam evaṁ vijñātaṁ bhavati* (*Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* 1.3): knowledge received through the transcendental, causeless mercy of the Lord is so perfect that by that knowledge the devotee becomes acquainted with all the different manifestations of the Lord. Lord Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu was present before Dhruva Mahārāja, who could also understand the Lord's two other forms, namely Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu and Kāraṇodakaśāyī (Mahā) Viṣṇu. Regarding Mahā-Viṣṇu, it is stated in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.48):

yasyaika-niśvasita-kālam athāvalambya
jīvanti loma-vilajā jagad-aṇḍa-nāthāḥ
viṣṇur mahān sa iha yasya kalā-viśeṣo
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi

③ At the end of each and every millennium, when all the material worlds are dissolved, everything enters the body of Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, who is lying on the lap of Śeṣa Nāga, another form of the Lord.

Those who are not devotees cannot understand the different forms of Viṣṇu and their positions in regard to the creation. Sometimes the atheists argue, "How can a flower stem sprout from the navel of Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu?" They consider all the statements of the *śāstras* to be stories. ④ As a result of their inexperience in the Absolute Truth and their reluctance to accept authority, they become more and more atheistic; they cannot understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead. ⑤ But a devotee like Dhruva Mahārāja, by the grace of the Lord, knows all the manifestations of the Lord and their different positions. It is said that anyone who has even a little of the Lord's grace can understand His glories; others may go on speculating on the Absolute Truth, but they will always be unable to understand the Lord. In other words, unless one comes in contact with a devotee it is not possible to understand the transcendental form or the spiritual world and its transcendental activities.

15 त्वं नित्यमुक्तपरिशुद्धविबुद्ध आत्मा
कूटस्थ आदिपुरुषो भगवांस्त्र्यधीशः
यद्बुद्ध्यवस्थितिमखण्डितया स्वदृष्ट्या
द्रष्टा स्थितावधिमखो व्यतिरिक्त आस्से

tvaṁ nitya-mukta-pariśuddha-vibuddha ātmā
kūṭa-stha ādi-puruṣo bhagavāṁs try-adhīśaḥ
yad-buddhy-avasthitim akhaṇḍitayā sva-dṛṣṭyā
draṣṭā sthitāv adhimakho vyatirikta āsse

tvam—You; *nitya*—eternally; *mukta*—liberated; *pariśuddha*—uncontaminated; *vibuddhaḥ*—full of knowledge; *ātmā*—the Supreme Soul; *kūṭa-sthaḥ*—changeless; *ādi*—original; *puruṣaḥ*—person; *bhagavān*—the Lord, full with six opulences; *tri-adhīśaḥ*—master of the three modes; *yat*—whence; *buddhi*—of intellectual activities; *avasthitim*—all stages; *akhaṇḍitayā*—unbroken; *sva-dṛṣṭyā*—by transcendental vision; *draṣṭā*—You witness; *sthitau*—for maintaining (the universe); *adhimakhaḥ*—enjoyer of the results of all sacrifices; *vyatiriktaḥ*—differently; *āsse*—You are situated.

My Lord, by Your unbroken transcendental glance You are the supreme witness of all stages of intellectual activities. You are eternally liberated, Your existence is situated in pure goodness, and You are existent in the Supersoul without change. You are the original Personality of Godhead, full with six opulences, and You are eternally the master of the three modes of material nature. Thus, You are always different from the ordinary living entities. As Lord Viṣṇu, You maintain all the affairs of the entire universe, and yet You stand aloof and are the enjoyer of the results of all sacrifices.

PURPORT: An atheistic argument against the supremacy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead states that if God, the Supreme Person, appears and disappears and sleeps and awakens, then what is the difference between God and the living entity? Dhruva Mahārāja is carefully distinguishing the existence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead from that of the living entities. He points out the following differences. The Lord is eternally liberated. Whenever He appears, even within this material world, He is never entangled by the three modes of material nature. ⑥ He is known, therefore, as *try-adhīśa,* the master of the three modes of material nature. In *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.14) it is said, *daivī hy eṣā guṇa-mayī mama māyā duratyayā:* the living entities are all entangled in the three modes of material nature. The external energy of the Lord is very strong, but the Lord, as the master of the three modes of material nature, is ever liberated from the action and reaction of those modes. He, therefore, is uncontaminated, as stated in the *Īśopaniṣad.* The contamination of the material world does not affect the Supreme Godhead. Kṛṣṇa therefore says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* that those who are rascals and fools think of Him as an ordinary human being, not knowing His *paraṁ bhāvam.* ⑦ *Paraṁ bhāvam* refers to His being always transcendentally situated. Material contamination cannot affect Him.

Another difference between the Lord and the living entity is that a living entity is always in darkness. Even though he may be situated in the mode of goodness, there are still so many things which are unknown to him. But it is not the same for the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He knows past, present, and future and everything that is happening in everyone's heart. *Bhagavad-gītā* confirms this (*vedāhaṁ samatītāni*). The Lord is not part of the soul—He is the unchangeable Supreme Soul, and the living entities are His parts and parcels. The living entity is forced to appear in this material world under the direction of *daiva-māyā,* but when the Lord appears, He comes by His own internal potency, *ātma-māyā.* Besides that, a living entity is within the time of past, present, and future. His life has a beginning, a birth, and in the conditioned state his life ends with death. But the Lord is *ādi-puruṣa,* the original person. In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* Lord Brahmā offers his respect to the *ādi-puruṣa,* Govinda, the original person, who has no beginning, whereas the creation of this material world has a beginning. The Vedānta says, *janmādy asya yataḥ;* everything is born from the Supreme, but the Supreme has no birth. He has all the six opulences in full and beyond comparison, He is the master of material nature, His intelligence is not broken under any circumstances, and He stands aloof, although He is the maintainer of the whole creation. As stated in the *Vedas* (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 2.2.13), *nityo nityānāṁ cetanaś cetanānām.* The Lord is the supreme maintainer. Living entities are meant to serve Him by offering sacrifices, for He is the rightful enjoyer of the results of all sacrifices. Everyone, therefore, should engage himself in the devotional service of the Lord with his life, his riches, his intelligence, and his words. This is the original, constitutional position of the living entities. One should never compare the sleeping of an ordinary living entity to the sleeping of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the Causal Ocean. There is no stage at which the living entity can compare to the Supreme Person. The Māyāvādī philosophers, being unable to adjust to all this, come to the conclusion of impersonalism or voidism.

16 यस्मिन् विरुद्धगतयो ह्यनिशं पतन्ति
विद्यादयो विविधशक्तय आनुपूर्व्यात्
तद्ब्रह्म विश्वभवमेकमनन्तमाद्य-
मानन्दमात्रमविकारमहं प्रपद्ये

(6) Why is the Lord known as *try-adhīśa*?
(7) What aspect of Kṛṣṇa does the term *paraṁ bhāvam* refer to?

yasmin viruddha-gatayo hy aniśaṁ patanti
vidyādayo vividha-śaktaya ānupūrvyāt
tad brahma viśva-bhavam ekam anantam ādyam
ānanda-mātram avikāram ahaṁ prapadye

yasmin—in whom; *viruddha-gatayaḥ*—of opposite character; *hi*—certainly; *aniśam*—always; *patanti*—are manifest; *vidyā-ādayaḥ*—knowledge and ignorance, etc.; *vividha*—various; *śaktayaḥ*—energies; *ānupūrvyāt*—continually; *tat*—that; *brahma*—Brahman; *viśva-bhavam*—the cause of material creation; *ekam*—one; *anantam*—unlimited; *ādyam*—original; *ānanda-mātram*—simply blissful; *avikāram*—changeless; *aham*—I; *prapadye*—offer my obeisances.

My dear Lord, in Your impersonal manifestation of Brahman there are always two opposing elements—knowledge and ignorance. Your multi-energies are continually manifest, but the impersonal Brahman, which is undivided, original, changeless, unlimited, and blissful, is the cause of the material manifestation. Because You are the same impersonal Brahman, I offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

PURPORT: In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* it is said that the unlimited impersonal Brahman is the effulgence of the transcendental body of Govinda. In that unlimited effulgent aura of the Supreme Personality of Godhead there are innumerable universes with innumerable planets of different categories. ⑧ Although the Supreme Person is the original cause of all causes, His impersonal effulgence, known as Brahman, is the immediate cause of the material manifestation. Dhruva Mahārāja, therefore, offered his respectful obeisances unto the impersonal feature of the Lord. One who realizes this impersonal feature can enjoy the unchangeable *brahmānanda,* described here as spiritual bliss.

⑨ Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura describes that this impersonal feature, or Brahman manifestation, of the Supreme Lord is meant for persons who are essentially very advanced but still not able to understand the personal features or variegatedness of the spiritual world. ⑩ Such devotees are known as *jñāna-miśra-bhaktas,* or devotees whose devotional service is mixed with empiric knowledge. Because the impersonal Brahman realization is a partial understanding of the Absolute Truth, Dhruva Mahārāja offers his respectful obeisances.

(8) Why does Dhruva Mahārāja offer his respectful obeisances unto the impersonal feature of the Lord?
(9) What type of person is meant for the Brahman manifestation of the Lord?
(10) Who are known as *jñāna-miśra-bhaktas*?

It is said that this impersonal Brahman is the distant realization of the Absolute Truth. Although apparently Brahman seems to be devoid of energy, factually it has different energies working under the headings of knowledge and ignorance. On account of these different energies, there is continually a manifestation of *vidyā* and *avidyā. Vidyā* and *avidyā* are very nicely described in *Īśopaniṣad.* It is said there that sometimes, due to *avidyā,* or a poor fund of knowledge, one accepts the Absolute Truth as ultimately impersonal. But in fact the impersonal and personal realizations develop in proportion to the development of devotional service. The more we develop our devotional service, the more closely we approach the Absolute Truth, which, in the beginning, when we realize the Absolute Truth from a distant place, is manifest as impersonal.

People in general, who are under the influence of *avidyā-śakti,* or *māyā,* have neither knowledge nor devotion. But when a person who is a little advanced and is therefore called a *jñānī* advances even more, he is in the category of a *jñāna-miśra-bhakta,* or a devotee whose love is mixed with empiric knowledge. When he is still further advanced, he can realize that the Absolute Truth is a person with multi-energies. An advanced devotee can understand the Lord and His creative energy. As soon as one accepts the creative energy of the Absolute Truth, the six opulences of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are also understood. Devotees who are still further advanced, in full knowledge, can understand the transcendental pastimes of the Lord. Only on that platform can one fully enjoy transcendental bliss. An example is given in this connection by Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura of a person proceeding towards a destination. As he approaches, he sees the destination from a distant place, just as we see a city from a distance. At that time he simply understands that the city is situated at a distance. When, however, he comes still nearer, he sees the domes and flags. But as soon as he enters the city, he sees various paths, gardens, lakes, and marketplaces with shops, and persons buying. He sees varieties of cinema houses, and he sees dancing and jubilation. When a person actually enters the city and personally sees the activities of the city, he becomes satisfied.

[*Continued in the next issue.*]

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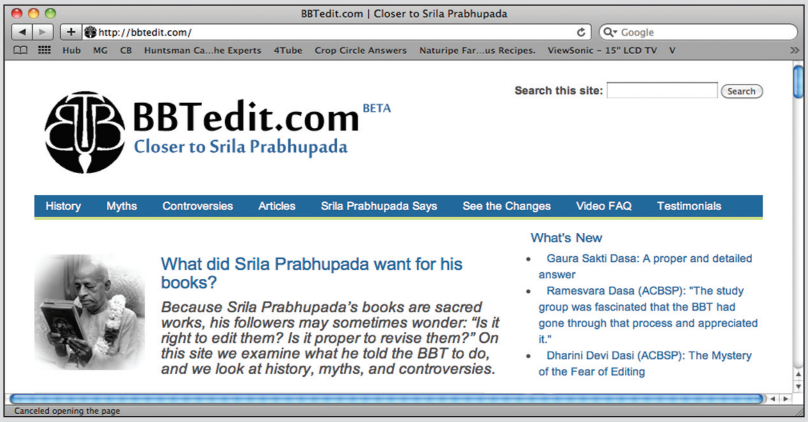
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What did Srila Prabhupada want for his books?

Because Srila Prabhupada's books are sacred works, his followers may sometimes wonder: "Is it right to edit them? Is it proper to revise them?" On this site we examine what he told the BBT to do, and we look at history, myths, and controversies.

What's New

- Gaura Sakti Dasa: A proper and detailed answer
- Ramesvara Dasa (ACBSP): "The study group was fascinated that the BBT had gone through that process and appreciated it."
- Dharini Devi Dasi (ACBSP): The Mystery of the Fear of Editing

BBT Edit: Closer to Śrīla Prabhupāda—At **www.BBTedit.com** you will find a fascinating documentary on the development and editing of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. Using articles and videos, the site deals primarily with *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is,* but also discusses *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Caitanya-caritāmṛta,* and *Teachings of Lord Caitanya.*

Browsing the pages, you'll find answers to questions about the editing of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books, and you'll better understand the editorial process of the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust (BBT). You'll also see Śrīla Prabhupāda's instructions that form the basis of the BBT's editorial policies.

The idea for BBTedit.com grew from a collection of videos made by Brahma-muhūrta Dāsa for a DVD produced by the Northern European BBT. In the videos, speakers such as Jayādvaita Swami, Śacīnanda Swami, Hari Śauri Dāsa, Gopīparāṇadhana Dāsa, and Nāgarāja Dāsa provide background and context to the work of editing and revising Śrīla Prabhupāda's books.

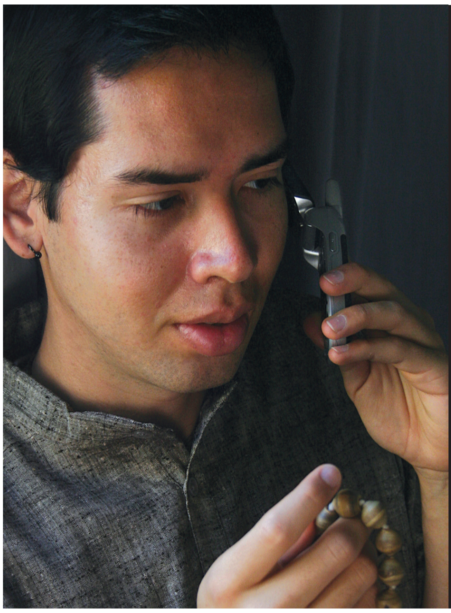
"Video FAQ" uses video interviews to discuss a wide range of topics and questions. By clicking on "See the Changes," you can download copies of original annotated pages of *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is.* These are scans of pages showing notes made by editors reviewing the texts.

Click on "Śrīla Prabhupāda Says," and you can read letters of instruction Prabhupāda wrote to his assistants and editors. Under "History" are several articles providing background on how Śrīla Prabhupāda directed his editors to work.

BBTedit.com also discusses myths and controversies that have grown up over the years, such as the myth that Śrīla Prabhupāda ordered that none of his books should be changed, and the myth that an *ācārya's* works should never be edited after his departure.

This site is designed to help answer questions, clear doubts, and allow you to benefit from insights provided by BBT editors, directors, and other devotees dedicated to Śrīla Prabhupāda's BBT. Read the "Testimonials" section to see what others think of the site, or click on Contact and send your own feedback.

—*Antony Brennan*



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The Wasatch Mountains form the backdrop for the Sri Sri Radha Krishna Temple in Spanish Fork, Utah. At right, temple founders Vaibhavī Devī Dāsī and Cāru Dāsa.

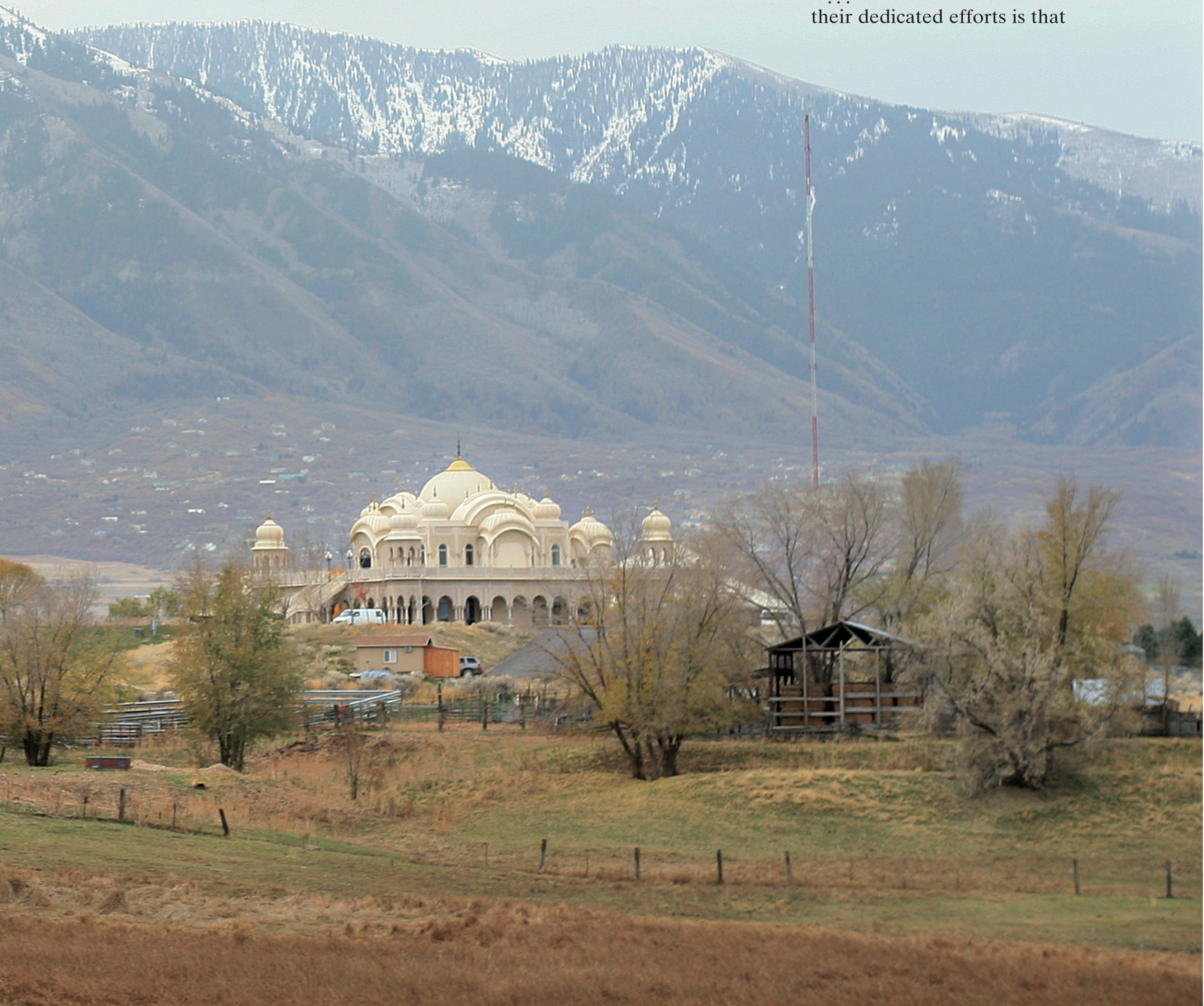
Photos by Cāru Dāsa, Vaibhavī Devī Dāsī, and Julian Gomez. Opening spread background photo by Merlin Macdonald.

By Amṛta Gopāla Dāsī

TEMPLE ON A HILL

Two dedicated disciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda have brought Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the heart of Mormon country in grand style.

ACCORDING to folklore, Bishop John Coyle, a popular Mormon leader, publicly prophesied in 1947 that a great temple would be built on a certain hill in Spanish Fork, Utah. He probably had something different in mind from what stands there today: a majestic Rajasthani-style temple of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. In 1982 two of Śrīla Prabhupāda's enthusiastic and innovative disciples, Cāru Dāsa and his wife, Vaibhavī Devī Dāsī, arrived in Spanish Fork to start a Hare Kṛṣṇa center. One result of their dedicated efforts is that



KRISHNA'S LOTUS TEMPLE

the temple they built on a hill now draws approximately fifty thousand visitors a year.

The temple lies in a scenic valley surrounded by a gorgeous mountain range. Hand-carved lotuses designed by Vaibhavī adorn the ceiling of the immaculate temple room. Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, Sītā-Rāma, and Gaura-Nitāi are the beautiful presiding deities. What was once a single two-story log house, which served as the temple and residence, has evolved into a fifty-foot-high palace that hosts spiritual retreats, yoga classes, and lively Sunday feasts. The pioneering spirit in the hearts of Cāru and Vaibhavī found a perfect setting in a place that even today is home to cowboys and missionaries.

Of course, it didn't manifest in a day. For several years Cāru and Vaibhavī employed their energies in raising funds for the temple.

"We jokingly call this 'The Temple that Cookies Built,'" remarked Śrī Hanumān Dāsa, a resident devotee from Utah who has served the temple for two years as a preacher and yoga teacher. Besides fifteen years of diligent *prasādam* distribution—Cāru remembers selling cookies wearing electric gloves in the middle of nearby Arizona's sub-zero winters—training and selling llamas in the 1980s provided substantial revenue for building the temple. Taking early advantage of a national fad for keeping llamas as pets and using them as packers on camping expeditions, Cāru and Vaibhavī became trendsetters in the llama trade.

"At one point we needed $8,000 to finish part of the construction," Vaibhavī recalled. "We had a lovely llama named Syamine (she had a bluish-black hue like Lord Kṛṣṇa's). A man looking for a llama to give his daughter walked in, saw Syamine and asked, 'How much?'

"'$8,000,' we said.

"He wrote a check on the spot."

The temple conducts daily tours for a steady stream of visitors, including the nearly three thousand students who come on three-hour field trips each year. The beauty and sanctity of the temple and the grounds never fail to impress. A popular gift shop, a *prasādam* buffet, and a menagerie of exotic animals (including forty llamas, twelve peacocks, three cows, and five parrots) charm the guests. Comments from the guest book reveal enthusiastic appreciation: "I love this place," "Stunning," and "Absolutely beautiful" are samples.

A small but dedicated group of full-time devotees assist in the maintenance, while local volunteers, mainly teenage boys and girls from troubled backgrounds, account for the rest of the labor. Besides training and organizing the volunteers, Vaibhavī also leads them in *kīrtana* and an evening *Bhagavad-gītā* discussion.

Completed in 2001, the temple (left) draws many visitors (below) to its eight major annual festivals. Below, left: a towering effigy of Rāvaṇa created by Vaibhavī Devī Dāsī for the Rāma Vijaya Festival.

Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa (left) reign resplendent from Their altar and enjoy the kīrtana *of Their worshipers (below, left). At right, a young devotee leads a melodious* bhajana. *Below, right, Cāru Dāsa talks to former Utah governor Jon Huntsman during a visit to the Governor's Mansion during Diwali 2008.*

The Temple Focus

Although the temple has much to offer as a tourist attraction (it is listed in *Amazing and Unusual Places in the US* as a "must-see"), preaching and outreach are the focus of the activities. The temple sponsors eight major festivals a year, the most popular being the Festival of Colors (Holi). Over ten thousand people flock to Spanish Fork in March to splash in fifty thousand bags of colored powder shipped from India. The major Utah newspapers always cover the event, as well as the India Fest, Llama Festival, and Diwali. Some professors at Brigham Young University award students extra credit for attending the festivals.

Utah's political leaders widely acknowledge and respect the temple. Both present governor Gary Herbert and the previous governor, Jon Huntsman, have visited the temple and received copies of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. For six years running, the Governor's Mansion has hosted a Diwali celebration, complete with *pūjā,* a talk given by Cāru, and a vegetarian feast.

Cāru and Vaibhavī were experienced devotees from the early 1970s

and helped manage centers in Australia and Berkeley, California. Cāru was a leading book distributor in the 1970s with aspirations to start a center.

"I distributed books for ten years, and I dreamed of opening a center where people would come and be attracted to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I wanted as far as possible to replicate the spiritual world, where people would walk through the door and say, 'Tell me all about it.'"

Under their leadership, the temple is steadily building a spiritual community of sincere and committed members from the local area. Cāru is frequently called upon to speak at interfaith gatherings and serves as a priest for various functions such as weddings and name-giving ceremonies. He has cultivated positive connections with the Hindu congregation in Salt Lake City (about fifty miles away) and is regularly invited to lecture in the homes of prominent families. The temple also enjoys favorable relations with the Mormon church. In 1999 The LDS Foundation, a charitable organization sponsored by the church, approved a $25,000 grant to cover the cost of building a dome for the temple, making the Hare Kṛṣṇas the first non-Christian group to receive a contribution.

A festival provides an opportunity for a youngster to bottle-feed a calf (above). At right, Vaibhavī directs children and llamas. At top, Cāru conducts a traditional Vedic wedding.

Building a World Congregation

Cāru is keen to use technology to reach the congregation. The couple broadcasted Kṛṣṇa music and live spiritual radio programs out of Los Angeles in the late 70s and continued to run a local radio station when they came to Utah. Switching to the Internet six years ago, KHQN is a popular web radio station and reaches an international audience. UtahKrishnas.com is one of the most frequented websites related to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, attracting a thousand visitors a day. Using Skype, Twitter, and other web communication tools,

Last year's Holi festival (above) drew ten thousand people. At right, Vaibhavī talks to a group of volunteers about temple projects.

VELTKAMP
XXL

Julian Gomez

Cāru has a long-term strategy to expand the temple's influence and accessibility beyond Spanish Fork to reach worldwide congregational members who will call the Utah Kṛṣṇa temple home.

Cāru's approach to speaking the Kṛṣṇa conscious philosophy is practical and down-to-earth: He uses PowerPoint presentations to persuade the audience of the applicability of Kṛṣṇa's teaching to daily life and its problems.

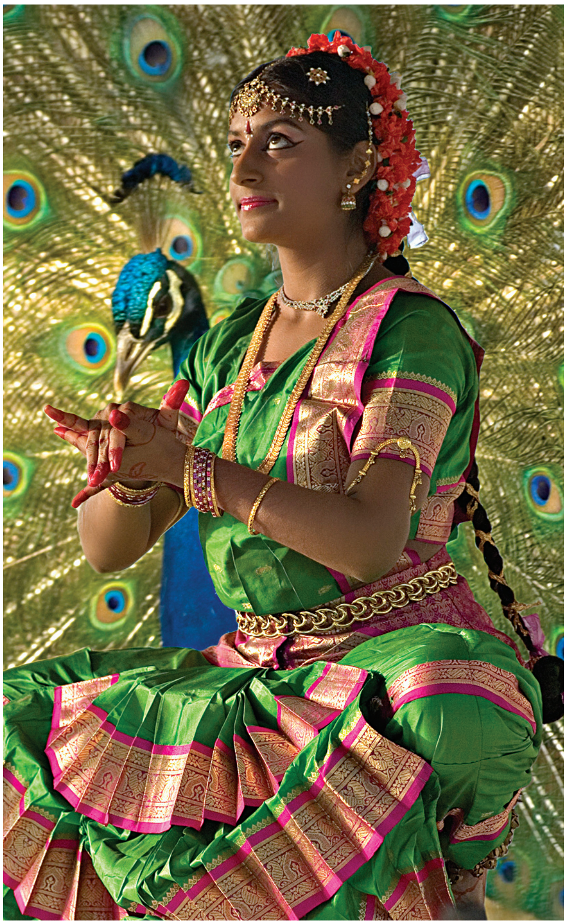
"Śrīla Prabhupāda stressed that Kṛṣṇa consciousness is natural and innate, and I've always been convinced we've got a wonderful product to offer," said Cāru. "Anyone who's focused can do what we've done; it hasn't been difficult. The successes are the fruit of not being distracted."

Cāru and Vaibhavī speak fondly of the "miracles" that they've seen Kṛṣṇa perform in reciprocation with their determined efforts to carry on the *saṅkīrtana* mission.

"We've never had our own bank account, and nothing belongs to us. Kṛṣṇa maintains those who preach," Cāru remarked. "Devotees can go to a college town, set up a storefront with an apartment overhead, and hold programs in the evenings. Preaching is so satisfying. We've simply tried to be resolute in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, as Kṛṣṇa prescribes in the *Bhagavad-gītā*."

Devotees who follow the example of this dedicated couple can be assured of receiving blessings, seeing miracles, and savoring the taste that comes with satisfying Śrīla Prabhupāda and the previous *ācāryas.* ❁

Amṛta Gopāla Dāsī is a disciple of His Holiness Jayapatāka Swami. She joined ISKCON in 2001 in Chittagong, Bangladesh, and has served in Śrīdhāma Māyāpur as a preacher and staff member of the Congregational Development Ministry.



Durgā Devī, the goddess of the material energy, makes her appearance in a play (above). Śatākṣī Devī Dāsī (left) performs a traditional Bharat Natyam dance.

© Rob Ellis | istockphoto.com

"O Lord, I have simply wasted my life. Even though I obtained the human form of life, I did not worship Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Thus I have knowingly drunk poison." —Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura

ALL WORK AND NO PRAY

Makes Our Lives Wasted

How we can give our work meaning beyond the paycheck.

By Indra Kṛṣṇa Dāsa

THE HOT, SWELTERING Dubai sun is raining fire. At temperatures close to 50˚ C (122˚ F), it takes more than a man to be out in the open. The cacophony of sounds from the grinding machines, the transformers, the air compressors, and the other equipment is jarring to the ear.

I am walking on the grounds of our fabrication yard, looking at offshore platforms at various stages of construction. Once completed, these gigantic structures will be placed onto barges, towed offshore, and installed in the sea with the help of huge floating cranes. Long pipes will be drilled through the platforms to great depths below the seabed to extract crude oil and gas from the bosom of the earth. This is man's answer to satisfy his ever increasing need for energy. While carrying out this most challenging of enterprises, thousands of workmen, supervisors, and engineers work with great dedication, immaculate precision, and adequate caution.

Worker: Just an Economic Unit

I stop close to a welder welding together two pieces of steel. He is all covered up—helmet, gloves, welder's goggles, face shield, and safety shoes. A cloth hides most of his face. As the steel turns red hot, drops of metal pour from the electrode and join the two pieces. White fumes rise, and the glare of the torch's light is blinding to the naked eye.

When work is done as an offering to the Lord, it paves the way for ultimate freedom from material existence.

The welder is an economic unit, and there are thousands of such economic units who turn bare pieces of metal into structures. These men are our workhorses. I turn to move, and he looks at me. I can't see his eyes clearly, but something stirs in him and he smiles, a sad and tired smile. Maybe he understands what I'm thinking. Maybe not. But he has been born for this—working every day from morning till night. He probably doesn't think about whether his life is meant for anything other than welding. Welding is all he knows. It brings him his money. He is happy that there is welding to be done and dreads the day when the work might cease.

He seems to have no choice. The smoke, the blinding spark, the heat, and the deafening noise that slowly and steadily rob him of his vitality are part of life. He and his colleagues seem completely conditioned by their work. And how much money do they make? Barely enough to survive another day.

The Meaning of Work

"Is work meant to be like this?" I ask myself.

To find an answer I turn to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,* the spotless Vedic literature that has an answer for every question that may concern us. I find a clear answer in the first chapter (1.2.8):

dharmaḥ svanuṣṭhitaḥ puṁsāṁ
viṣvaksena-kathāsu yaḥ
notpādayed yadi ratiṁ
śrama eva hi kevalam

"The occupational activities a man performs according to his own position are only so much useless labor if they do not provoke attraction for the message of the Personality of Godhead." The venerable Sūta Gosvāmī spoke this verse to a gathering of learned sages at Naimisharanya, on the banks of the river Ganges about five thousand years ago. Each of us performs work according to his position, Sūta Gosvāmī tells us, but the work is just useless labor if it does not fulfill its main purpose: provoking our attraction to the message of the Lord.

God could have provided us with everything ready-made, but He gave us an opportunity to understand Him through our work. God is present in every atom of matter. Through our work we interact with nature, and thus we can know its workings. This should help us understand God, under whose direction nature works so perfectly. But because of our sinful tendencies, we like to exploit material nature and therefore can't see the hand of Kṛṣṇa in everything. Kṛṣṇa works so wonderfully that He's like an expert magician. He hides all that is there and makes us see things that are not there. This is *māyā,* the Lord's external energy, which keeps materially conditioned living beings in illusion. Kṛṣṇa keeps us in illusion in response to our desire to enjoy in this world. Because we are spiritual beings, we can only "enjoy" this world while in illusion.

Work or action generally causes bondage to the material world according to the laws of karma. But when the same work is done as an offering to the Lord, it paves the way for ultimate freedom from material existence. This is karma-yoga, working and acting under the direction of the Supreme Lord for His satisfaction.

I see each worker engaged in making this gigantic platform according to his capabilities, but does his labor bring about an attraction to the message of the Lord? The workers probably have no knowledge of God. In the absence of true knowledge, they may believe that God does not exist. Or they may believe that if He does exist, then He must be unkind. In His creation they have to labor hard just to subsist. Fortunately, by the great mercy of the Lord and His devotees, some of them may get enlightened about devotional service and become devotees. Only then can their hard labor bear the fruit for which it is truly intended.

Up on the Platform

I walk up the stairs of one of the platforms. It is a world in itself. I go on and around the various levels. Workmen are all over the place installing pieces of equipment and piping. Sparks fly, and in some places the noise is deafening. Workplaces are barricaded, and safety signs are everywhere. Engineers and inspectors minutely check on the work being carried out. There is no room for error.

The platform is full of all kinds and sizes of equipment that speak volumes of man's ingenuity in harnessing nature and the great strides technology has taken. Every piece of machinery performs an important task, and everything is perfectly organized. A sense of fulfillment and achievement swells up in me as I see some of my designs working.

This platform will be able to produce millions of tons of oil and gas, allowing us to drive our cars, run our industries, and cook our food. Many people are being employed. A sense of satisfaction comes over me; all in all, the effort is worth it.

I climb the stairs to reach the top deck, walk to the edge of the platform, and look out on the blue sea. Alongside the quay lie anchored barges and vessels containing various structures and equipment. The soft splashing waves move them slowly up and down. The wind and the waves give a feeling of goodness. Seagulls soar above or float merrily on the sea. They chirp happily, oblivious of everything going on around them. The whole place appears so lively. Across the harbor, gantries load and unload containers from a ship at port.

I walk back and climb down the stairs. The scene is the same—people all over the place laboring hard to construct the platform, to make money. Some will make a lot, some a little. The company will calculate success in terms of profit. A strange feeling of uneasiness overcomes me. Is making money the only aim in life? What has been the purpose of my life? Building these offshore platforms?

For most of us, our jobs take away almost all our time and energy. We believe that our jobs provide us with our basic need for money, and they may also give us power and position. But is that all that life is for? Should we spend the rest of our lives working for temporary rewards?

The endless cycle of making money and spending it in sense gratification is unsatisfying to the soul. Each of us is essentially a spiritual soul encased in a material body; unless we satisfy the soul, we will not be happy. We see that even the most materially successful person is frustrated. The real meaning of life is *athāto brahma-jijñāsā*: one must inquire about the Absolute Truth.

Even from a worldly perspective we can see that work is unsatisfying because of systematic exploitation. Those who do the hard work are unlikely to enjoy the fruits; someone else will. Just as a man exploits another man and a country another country, *māyā* exploits all souls in this world. The exploiter and the exploited are all stuck within the cycle of exploitation, the roles reversing with time. We need to get out of this cycle.

"There's no point in working hard like asses," I think. "The true success of work is to get delivered from it, not to get stuck in it."

I keep walking down the stairs. My knees hurt—warning signals that time is running out for me; my body is aging. My most valuable instrument, the body, is wearing down. Some years back, I could go up and down the platform without fatigue or pain. A chill overcomes me. Then a question strikes me like lightning: "Is my life wasted?"

A Human Life Wasted

The words of the great sixteenth-century Bengali Vaiṣṇava saint Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura ring in my mind:

hari hari! viphale janama goṅāinu
manuṣya-janama pāiyā,
rādhā-kṛṣṇa nā bhajiyā,
jāniyā śuniyā biṣa khāinu

"O Lord, I have simply wasted my life. Even though I obtained the human form of life, I did not worship Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Thus I have knowingly drunk poison."

I walk back toward my office, shutting my mind out from everything around me. I want to focus on my spiritual life. A sense of urgency overcomes me. Like a desperate man, I start to take stock of my devotional life. I ask myself: Is my chanting of the holy names good enough? Why am I not getting the real taste for chanting? Why is my chanting done as a routine chore, like any other activity? Why does my soul not cry out for the Lord? Why am I so attached to this humdrum life?

The Lord is willing to give us permanent residence in His spiritual abode. Only a fool will not be interested. I resolve to take devotional service more seriously.

As Kali-yuga, the present degraded age, expands, opportunities to chant the names of the Lord will diminish. Thanks to Śrīla Prabhupāda, we have the chance now.

TEMPLE WEBSITES

Many ISKCON centers have their own websites. To limit the number of pages taken up by the list of ISKCON centers that we run in each issue (pp. 59–61), we don't include websites as part of the listings. If you'd like to find out if a temple has a website, log on to Krishna.com and click on "Address list" on the home page.

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Let us make the best use of this opportunity and not wait for another life. Who knows what kind of body or in what situation we will find ourselves in our next life? Better to sacrifice everything in this life, become fully Kṛṣṇa conscious, and go back home, back to Godhead.

The Principle Of Yukta-Vairāgya

Śrīla Prabhupāda and his predecessors exemplified and expounded on *yukta-vairāgya,* the principle of making spiritual progress by engaging material things in the service of Kṛṣṇa. Today's Vaiṣṇavas do not live in secluded places but prefer to live where they can preach the glories of the Lord. The topmost level of spiritual consciousness is developed not by dissociating oneself from the world but by using everything in the service of Kṛṣṇa. True Kṛṣṇa consciousness means working for the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa, not rejecting work. By engaging everything in the service of Kṛṣṇa without personal desire, one can save oneself from material contamination and be situated on the transcendental plane.

By working efficiently on the material plane but not over-endeavoring, we can find invaluable time for devotional service. We can set aside a sizeable portion of our income and time to spread the unadulterated message of Kṛṣṇa. We can chant the *mahā-mantra* sincerely, avoiding all offenses, associate with the devotees, study the scriptures, remove all unnecessary entanglements from our life, follow the rules and regulations of a regulated life, and lead a life in harmony with nature. There is no need to change our jobs, but we need to change our consciousness.

I walk into my office, and a notice for another meeting pops up on my computer. I pick up my files and walk to the meeting, where everybody is smiling at the progress the company is making and the great job they are doing. I am unable to share their optimism and their sense of achievement and success. I feel lonely. I go through the proceedings mechanically. I am lost internally in my world, in the hopelessness of insufficient spiritual life.

In the evening at home, as I sit in front of the altar, I pray to my Gaura-Nitāi deities to help me in my spiritual life. I pray for the mercy of my spiritual master, who has shown me the path to the Lord. I thank all the devotees who introduced me to Kṛṣṇa consciousness and because of whom I am still there. I am grateful to the wonderful institution ISKCON that Prabhupāda founded and for how beautifully his disciples and followers are carrying on his work all over the world. For a sincere soul desiring to go back home, back to Godhead, our *ācāryas* left a wealth of information and clear instructions on how to do that. We have only to follow them and not engage in mental speculation or unnecessary research.

I stand humbled, resolute to make an improvement in my devotional life. I also look back on so many other days when I had resolved to put more enthusiasm into my spiritual life but could not sustain it. After all life has its own way of unfolding; I am carried away by the storms of time. I am unable to hold steadfastly on to the lotus feet of the Lord, who is the source of our life and all that be.

There is hope, however. Hope that someday I will lose all attachment to worldly affairs. Hope that someday the Lord will shower His mercy on me and that I will become purified by devotional service. Hope that someday He will take me, as His eternal obedient son, into His eternal abode.

Indra Kṛṣṇa Dāsa, 47, received initiation from His Holiness Jayapatāka Swami Mahārāja in 2005. He has a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from IIT Kharagpur (India) and a master's degree in structural engineering from IIT Delhi. He lives in Dubai with his wife and their two sons. He can be reached at ibanerjee123@yahoo.co.in.

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Brahmapur, Orissa — Hare Krishna Temple, N. H. No. 5, Dist. Ganjam, 760 008/ Tel. (0680) 2350100 or 9437179400/ pancharatna.gkg@pamho.net
Brahmapur, Orissa — Sri Rama Govinda Mandir, Aska Rd., at Post Ankuspur, Brahmapur, Dist. Ganjam, 761 100/ Tel. (0680) 2485720/ srigopalccd@yahoo.co.in
Chamorshi, Maharashtra — 78, Krishna Nagar, Dist. Gadchiroli, Chamorshi 264 403/ Tel. 09423422914
Chandigarh, Punjab — Hare Krishna Dham, Sector 36-B, 160 036/ Tel. (0172) 260-1590 or 260-3232/ iskcon.chandigarh@pamho.net
Chennai (Madras) — Hare Krishna Land, off ECR, Akkarai, Sholinganallur, Chennai 600 119/ Tel. (044) 24530921 or 24530923/ info@iskconchennai.com
Coimbatore, TN — Jagannath Mandir, Hare Krishna Land, Aerodrome P.O., Opp. CIT, 641 014/ Tel. (0422) 2917509 or 2626508/ info@iskcon-coimbatore.org
Dwarka, Gujarat — Bharatiya Bhavan, Devi Bhavan Rd., 361 335/ Tel. (02892) 34606/ Fax: (02892) 34319
Gadei Giri, Orissa — Post Alabol via Balikuda, Dist. Jagatsinghpur, 754 108/ Tel. (06724) 238112/ srigopalccd@yahoo.co.in
Ghaziabad, UP — Hare Krishna Marg, R-11/35, Raj Nagar, 201 002/ Tel. 9312438001 or 9312438000/ Fax: (0120) 2824200/ iskcon.ghaziabad@pamho.net
Guntur, AP — Opp. Sivalayam, Peda Kakani 522 509
Guwahati, Assam — Ulubari Chariali, South Sarania, 781 007/ Tel. (0361) 2525963/ iskcon.guwahati@pamho.net
Hanumkonda, AP — Neeladri Rd., Kapuwada, 506 011/ Tel. (08712) 77399
Haridaspur, WB — P.O. Chhaygharia, Bangaon, 24 Parganas, 743 704/ Tel. (03215) 57856
Haridwar, Uttaranchal — Prabhupada Ashram, G. House, Nai Basti, Mahadev Nagar, Bhimgoda 249 401/ Tel. (01334) 260818 or 9411371870
Hyderabad, AP — Hare Krishna Land, Nampally Station Rd., 500 001/ Tel. (040) 24744969 or 24607089/ iskcon.hyderabad@pamho.net
Imphal, Manipur — Hare Krishna Land, Airport Rd., 795 001/ Tel. (0385) 2455245, 2455247, or 2455693/ manimandir@sancharnet.in
Indore, MP — ISKCON, Nipania, Indore/ Tel. 9300474043/ mahaman.acbsp@pamho.net
Jaipur, Rajasthan — ISKCON Rd., Opp. Vijay Path, Mansarovar, Jaipur 302 020 (mail: ISKCON, 84/230, Sant Namdev Marg, Opp. K.V. No. 5, Mansarovar, Jaipur 302 020)/ Tel. (0141) 2782765 or 2781860/ jaipur@pamho.net
Jhansi, UP — Inside Saiyar Gate, Near Kali Badi/ Tel. (0510) 2443602
Kanpur, UP — Mainawati Marg, Bithur Rd., Nawabganj, 208 002/ Tel. 09307188117/ iskcon.kanpur@pamho.net
Katra, J&K — Srila Prabhupada Ashram, Sri Kalika Mata Mandir, Katra Vaishnodevi, 182 101/ Tel. (01991) 233047
Kolkata (Calcutta), WB — 3C Albert Rd., 700 017 (behind Minto Park, opp. Birla High School)/ Tel. (033) 3028-9258 or -9280/ iskcon.calcutta@pamho.net
◆ **Kurukshetra, Haryana —** ISKCON, Main Bazaar, 136 118/ Tel. (01744) 234806 or 235529
Lucknow, UP — 1 Ashok Nagar, Guru Govind Singh Marg, 226 018/ Tel. (0522) 2636500, 9415235050 or 9415008065/ lucknow@pamho.net
Ludhiana, Punjab — Sterling Tower, Vrindavan Rd., Civil Lines, 141 001/ Tel. (0161) 2770600, (0161) 3118897 or 98159-40005/ iskcon.ludhiana@pamho.net
Madurai, TN — 37 Maninagaram Main Rd., 625 001/ Tel. (0452) 274-6472
Mangalore, Karnataka — ISKCON Sri Jaganath Mandir, near Hotel Woodlands, Bunts Hotel Rd., 575 003/ Tel. (0824) 2423326 or 2442756, or 9844325616
◆ **Mayapur, WB —** ISKCON, Shree Mayapur Chandrodaya Mandir, Shree Mayapur Dham, Dist. Nadia, 741 313/ Tel. (03472) 245239, 245240, or 245233/ Fax: (03472) 245238/ mayapur.chandrodaya@pamho.net
Moirang, Manipur — Nongban Enkhol, Tidim Rd./ Tel. (03879) 795133
◆ **Mumbai (Bombay), Maharashtra —** Hare Krishna Land, Juhu 400 049/ Tel. (022) 26206860/ Fax: (022) 26205214/ info@iskconmumbai.com; guest.house.bombay@pamho.net
◆ **Mumbai, Maharashtra —** 7 K. M. Munshi Marg, Chowpatty 400 007/ Tel. (022) 23665500/ Fax: (022) 23665555/ info@radhagopinath.com
Mumbai, Maharashtra — Shristhi Complex, Mira Rd. (E), opposite Royal College, Dist. Thane, 401 107/ Tel. (022) 2811-7795 or -7796/ Fax: (022) 2811-8875/ jagjivan.gkg@pamho.net
Mysore, Karnataka — #31, 18th Cross, Jayanagar, 570 014/ Tel. (0821) 2500582 or 6567333/ mysore.iskcon@gmail.com
Nagpur, Maharashtra — Bharatwada Rd., Near Golmohar Nagar, Ramanuja Nagar, Kalamana Market, Nagpur 440 008/ Tel. 937015638, 9371064102, or 9423635311/ iskcon.nagpur@pamho.net
Nellore, AP — ISKCON City, Hare Krishna Rd., 524 004/ Tel. (0861) 2314577 or 09215536589/ sukadevaswami@gmail.com
◆ **New Delhi, UP —** Hare Krishna Hill, Sant Nagar Main Rd., East of Kailash, 110 065/ Tel. (011) 2623-5133, 4, 5, 6, or 7/ Fax: (011) 2621-5421/ delhi@pamho.net; (Guesthouse: neel.sunder@pamho.net)
New Delhi, UP — 41/77, Punjabi Bagh (West), 110 026/ Tel. (011) 25222851 or 25227478
Noida, UP — A-5, Sector-33, 201 301 (Opposite NTPC office)/ Tel. (0120) 2506211
Pandharpur, Maharashtra — Hare Krishna Dhama, East Bank of Chandrabhaga River, Pandharpur, Dist. Solapur, 413 304/ Tel. (02186) 267242 or 267266, or 9423335991/ iskcon.pandharpur@pamho.net
Patna, Bihar — Arya Kumar Rd., Rajendra Nagar, 800 016/ Tel. (0612) 687637 or 685081/ Fax: (0612) 687635/ krishna.kripa.jps@pamho.net
Pune, Maharashtra — 4 Tarapoor Rd., Camp, 411 001/ Tel. (020) 41033222 or 41033223/ nvcc@iskconpune.in
Puri, Orissa — Bhakti Kuti, Swargadwar, 752 001/ Tel. (06752) 231440
Raipur, Chhatisgarh — Hare Krishna Land, Alopi Nagar, Opposite Maharshi Vidyalaya, Tatibandh, Raipur 492 001/ Tel. (0771) 5037555 or 9893276985/ iskconraipur@yahoo.com
Rajkot, Gujarat — Sri Sri Radha Neelmadhav Dham, Kalawad Rd., Opposite Kankot Patiya, Mota Mava, 360 005/ Tel. 9898550185/ vaishnavseva@yahoo.co.in
Ranaghat, WB — Gourdham, Habibpur, Ranaghat, Dist. Nadia, 741 403/ Tel. (03473) 281150 or 281226/ shyamrup.jps@pamho.net
Salem, TN — ISKCON, Hare Krishna Land, Karuppur 636 012/ Tel. (0427) 2001686/ iskcon.salem@pamho.net
Secunderabad, AP — 27 St. John's Rd., 500 026/ Tel. (040) 780-5232/ Fax: (040) 814021
Silchar, Assam — Ambikapatti, Silchar, Dist. Cachar, 788 004/ Tel. (03842) 34615
Siliguri, WB — ISKCON Rd., Gitalpara, 734 406/ Tel. (0353) 426619, 539046, or 539082
Solapur, Maharashtra — Hare Krishna Land, 171/2 Uttar Kasabe, Akkalkot Rd., Bhaktivedanta Marg, near New Jakat Naka, Dist. Solapur, 413006/ Tel. 9371178393 or 9370651251/ shursendas@yahoo.co.in
Sri Rangam, TN — 103 Amma Mandapam Rd., Sri Rangam, Trichy 620 006/ Tel. (0431) 2433945/ iskcon_srirangam@yahoo.com.in
Surat, Gujarat — Ashram Rd., Jahangirpura, 395 005/ Tel. (0261) 2765891 or 2765516/ surat@pamho.net
Thiruvananthapuram (Trivandrum), Kerala — Hospital Rd., Thycaud, 695 014/ Tel. (0471) 2328197/ jsdasa@yahoo.co.in
Tirunelveli, TN — 10B Tiruvananthapuram, Near Vannarapettai Circle, 627 002/ Tel. (0462) 2501640
◆ **Tirupati, AP —** K.T. Rd., Vinayaka Nagar, 517 507/ Tel. (0877) 2231760 or 2230009/ revati.raman.jps@pamho.net (Guesthouse: guesthouse.tirupati@pamho.net)
Udhampur, J&K — Srila Prabhupada Ashram, Srila Prabhupada Marg, Srila Prabhupada Nagar 182 101/ Tel. (01992) 270298/ info@iskconudhampur.com
Ujjain, MP — 35–37 Hare Krishna Land, Bharatpuri, 456 010/ Tel. (0734) 2535000 or 2531000, or 9300969016/ Fax: (0734) 2536000/ iskcon.ujjain@pamho.net
Vallabh Vidyanagar, Gujarat — Opp. B&B Polytechnic, Mota Bazaar, Ananda, 388 120/ Tel. (02692) 230796 or 233012/ iskcon.vvnagar@pamho.net
Varanasi, UP — ISKCON, B 27/80 Durgakund Rd., Near Durgakund Police Station, Varanasi 221 010/ Tel. (0542) 246422 or 222617
Vellore, TN — Chennai Ext. Centre, 10–12, 10th East Cross Road, Gandhi Nagar, 632 006
Vijayawada, AP — Venkatapalem Karakatta Rd., Undavalli Village, Tadepalli Mandaal, Vijayawada, Dist. Guntur 522 501/ Tel. (08645) 272513/ mmdasiskconvijayawada@gmail.com
Visakhapatnam, AP — Hare Krishna Land, Sagaranagar 530 045 (mail: ISKCON, D. No. 7-5-108, Pandurangapuram Beach Rd., 530 003)/ Tel. (0891)2528376 or 6537625/ samba.jps@pamho.net; Guesthouse: guesthouse.vizag@pamho.net
◆ **Vrindavan, UP —** Krishna-Balaram Mandir, Bhaktivedanta Swami Marg, Raman Reti, Dist. Mathura, 281 124/ Tel. & Fax: (0565) 2540728/ iskcon.vrindavan@pamho.net; (Guesthouse: Tel. (0565) 2540022; ramamani@sancharnet.in)
Warangal, AP — Mulugu Rd., Ayappa Pidipally, 506 007/ Tel. (08712) 426182
Yamunanagar, Haryana — ISKCON Hare Krishna Dham, Hare Krishna Marg, Raghunathpuri, Yamunanagar 135001/ Tel. (01732) 321001 or (mobile) 09355330775/ vishu_bakshi05@yahoo.co.in

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Ahmedabad District, Gujarat (Hare Krishna Farm) — Katwada (contact ISKCON Ahmedabad)
Assam — Karnamadhu, Dist. Karimganj
Chamorshi, Maharashtra — 78 Krishnanagar Dham, Dist. Gadhachiroli, 442 603/ Tel. (0218) 623473
Hyderabad, AP (New Naimisaranya Farm) — P.O. Dabilpur Village, Medchal Tq., Dist. R.R., 501 401/ Tel. (040) 65520070 or 9440057263/ naimisaranya@pamho.net

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CENTERS AROUND THE WORLD

Indore, MP (Krishna-Balarama Mandir) — Hare Krishna Vihar, Nipania Village/ Tel. (0731) 572794
Mayapur, WB — (contact ISKCON Mayapur)
Puri, Orissa — ISKCON, Bhaktivedanta Ashram, Sipasirubuli, 752 001/ Tel. (06752) 230494
Surat, Gujarat — Bhaktivedanta Rajavidyalaya, Krishnalok, Surat-Bardoli Rd. Gangapur, P. O. Gangadhara, Dist. Surat, 394 310/ Tel. (02622) 63546
Vrindavan, UP — Vrinda Kund, Nandagaon, Dist. Mathura

ADDITIONAL RESTAURANTS

Kolkata, WB — Govinda's, ISKCON House, 22 Gurusaday Rd., 700 019/ Tel. (033) 24756922 or 24749009
Surat, Gujarat — Ashram Rd., Jahangirpura 395005/ Tel. (0261) 2765891 or 2765516/ surat@pamho.net

CANADA

Brampton-Mississauga, Ontario — Unit 20, 1030 Kamato Dr., L4W 4B6/ Tel. (416) 840-6587 or (905) 826-1290/ iskconbrampton@gmail.com
Calgary, Alberta — 313 Fourth St. N.E., T2E 3S3/ Tel. (403) 265-3302/ Fax: (403) 547-0795/ vamanstones@shaw.ca
Edmonton, Alberta — 9353 35th Ave. NW, T6E 5R5/ Tel. (780) 439-9999/ harekrishna.edmonton@gmail.com
Montreal, Quebec — 1626 Pie IX Blvd., H1V 2C5/ Tel. & fax: (514) 521-1301/ iskconmontreal@gmail.com
◆ **Ottawa, Ontario —** 212 Somerset St. E., K1N 6V4/ Tel. (613) 565-6544/ Fax: (613) 565-2575/ iskconottawa@sympatico.ca
Regina, Saskatchewan — 1279 Retallack St., S4T 2H8/ Tel. (306) 525-0002 or -6461/ jagadishadas@yahoo.com
Toronto, Ontario — 243 Avenue Rd., M5R 2J6/ Tel. (416) 922-5415/ Fax: (416) 922-1021/ toronto@pamho.net
Vancouver, B.C. — 5462 S.E. Marine Dr., Burnaby V5J 3G8/ Tel. (604) 433-9728/ Fax: (604) 648-8715; Govinda's Bookstore & Cafe: (604) 433-7100 or (888) 433-8722/ akrura@krishna.com

RURAL COMMUNITY

Ashcroft, B.C. — Saranagati Dhama, Venables Valley (mail: P. O. Box 99, V0K 1A0)/ Tel. (250) 457-7438/ Fax: (250) 453-9306/ iskconsaranagati@hotmail.com

U.S.A.

◆ **Atlanta, Georgia —** 1287 South Ponce de Leon Ave., N.E., 30306/ Tel. & fax: (404) 377-8680/ admin@atlantaharekrishnas.com
Baltimore, Maryland — 200 Bloomsbury Ave., Catonsville, 21228/ Tel. (410) 719-1776/ Fax: (410) 799-0642/ info@baltimorekrishna.com
Berkeley, California — 2334 Stuart St., 94705/ Tel. (510) 649-8619/ Fax: (510) 665-9366
Boise, Idaho — 1615 Martha St., 83706/ Tel. (208) 344-4274/ boise_temple@yahoo.com
Boston, Massachusetts — 72 Commonwealth Ave., 02116/ Tel. (617) 247-8611/ Fax: (617) 909-5181/ darukrishna@iskconboston.org
Chicago, Illinois — 1716 W. Lunt Ave., 60626/ Tel. (773) 973-0900/ Fax: (773) 973-0526/ chicagoiskcon@yahoo.com
Columbus, Ohio — 379 W. Eighth Ave., 43201/ Tel. (614) 421-1661/ Fax: (614) 294-0545/ rmanjari@sbcglobal.net
◆ **Dallas, Texas —** 5430 Gurley Ave., 75223/ Tel. (214) 827-6330/ Fax: (214) 823-7264/ txkrishnas@aol.com; restaurant: vegetariantaste@aol.com
◆ **Denver, Colorado —** 1400 Cherry St., 80220/ Tel. (303) 333-5461/ Fax: (303) 321-9052/ info@krishnadenver.com
Detroit, Michigan — 383 Lenox Ave., 48215/ Tel. (313) 824-6000/ gaurangi108@hotmail.com
Gainesville, Florida — 214 N.W. 14th St., 32603/ Tel. (352) 336-4183/ Fax: (352) 379-2927/ kalakantha.acbsp@pamho.net
Hartford, Connecticut — 1683 Main St., E. Hartford, 06108/ Tel. & fax: (860) 289-7252/ pyari@sbcglobal.net
◆ **Honolulu, Hawaii —** 51 Coelho Way, 96817/ Tel. (808) 595-4913/ rama108@bigfoot.com
Houston, Texas — 1320 W. 34th St., 77018/ Tel. (713) 686-4482/ Fax: (713) 956-9968/ management@iskconhouston.org
Kansas City, Missouri — Rupanuga Vedic College (Men's Seminary), 5201 The Paseo, 64110/ Tel. (800) 340-5286 or (816) 924-5619/ Fax: (816) 361-0509/ info@rvc.edu
Laguna Beach, California — 285 Legion St., 92651/ Tel. (949) 494-7029/ info@lagunatemple.com
Las Vegas, Nevada — Govinda's Center of Vedic India, 6380 S. Eastern Ave., Suite 8, 89120/ Tel. (702) 434-8332/ info@govindascenter.com
◆ **Los Angeles, California —** 3764 Watseka Ave., 90034/ Tel. (310) 836-2676/ Fax: (310) 839-2715/ membership@harekrishnala.com
◆ **Miami, Florida —** 3220 Virginia St., 33133 (mail: 3109 Grand Ave., #491, Coconut Grove, FL 33133)/ Tel. (305) 442-7218/ devotionalservice@iskcon-miami.org
New Orleans, Louisiana — 2936 Esplanade Ave., 70119/ Tel. (504) 304-0032 (office) or (504) 638-1944 (temple)/ gopal211@aol.com
◆ **New York, New York —** 305 Schermerhorn St., Brooklyn, 11217/ Tel. (718) 855-6714/ Fax: (718) 875-6127/ ramabhadra@aol.com
New York, New York — 26 Second Ave., 10003/ Tel. (212) 253-6182/ krishnanyc@gmail.com
Orlando, Florida — 2651 Rouse Rd., 32817/ Tel. (407) 257-3865
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania — 41 West Allens Ln., 19119/ Tel. (215) 247-4600/ Fax: (215) 247-8702/ iskconphilly@aol.com
◆ **Philadelphia, Pennsylvania —** 1408 South St., 19146/ Tel. (215) 985-9303/ savecows@aol.com
Phoenix, Arizona — 100 S. Weber Dr., Chandler, 85226/ Tel. (480) 705-4900/ Fax: (480) 705-4901/ svgd108@yahoo.com
Portland, Oregon — 3766 SE Division, 97202/ Tel. (503) 236-6734; info@iskconportland.com
St. Augustine, Florida — 3001 First St., 32804/ Tel. & fax: (904) 819-0221/ vasudeva108@gmail.com
◆ **St. Louis, Missouri —** 3926 Lindell Blvd., 63108/ Tel. (314) 535-8085 or 534-1708/ Fax: (314) 535-0672/ iskcon.stl@pamho.net
San Antonio, Texas — 6772 Oxford Trace, 78240/ Tel. (210) 401-6576/ aadasa@gmail.com
◆ **San Diego, California —** 1030 Grand Ave., Pacific Beach, 92109/ Tel. (310) 895-0104/ Fax: (858) 483-0941/ krishna.sandiego@gmail.com
San Jose, California — 951 S. Bascom Ave., 95128/ Tel. (408) 293-4959/ iskconsanjose@yahoo.com
Seattle, Washington — 1420 228th Ave. S.E., Sammamish, 98075/ Tel. (425) 246-8436/ Fax: (425) 868-8928/ info@vedicculturalcenter.org
◆ **Spanish Fork, Utah —** Krishna Temple Project & KHQN Radio, 8628 S. State Rd., 84660/ Tel. (801) 798-3559/ Fax: (810) 798-9121/ carudas@earthlink.net
Tallahassee, Florida — 1323 Nylic St., 32304/ Tel. & fax: (850) 224-3803/ darudb@hotmail.com
Towaco, New Jersey — 100 Jacksonville Rd. (mail: P.O. Box 109), 07082/ Tel. & fax: (973) 299-0970/ newjersey@iskcon.net
◆ **Tucson, Arizona —** 711 E. Blacklidge Dr., 85719/ Tel. (520) 792-0630/ Fax: (520) 791-0906/ tucphx@cs.com
Washington, D.C. — 10310 Oaklyn Dr., Potomac, Maryland 20854/ Tel. (301) 299-2100/ Fax: (301) 299-5025/ ad@pamho.net

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◆ **Alachua, Florida (New Raman Reti) —** 17306 N.W. 112th Blvd., 32615 (mail: P.O. Box 819, 32616)/ Tel. (386) 462-2017/ Fax: (386) 462-2641/ alachuatemple@gmail.com
Carriere, Mississippi (New Talavan) — 31492 Anner Rd., 39426/ Tel. (601) 749-9460 or 799-1354/ Fax: (601) 799-2924/ talavan@hughes.net
Gurabo, Puerto Rico (New Govardhana Hill) — Carr. 181, Km. 16.3, Bo. Santa Rita, Gurabo (mail: HC-01, Box 8440, Gurabo, PR 00778)/ Tel. (787) 367-3530 or (787) 737-1722/ manonath@gmail.com
Hillsborough, North Carolina (New Goloka) — 1032 Dimmocks Mill Rd., 27278/ Tel. (919) 732-6492/ bkgoswami@earthlink.net
◆ **Moundsville, West Virginia (New Vrindaban) —** R.D. No. 1, Box 319, Hare Krishna Ridge, 26041/ Tel. (304) 843-1600; Guest House, (304) 845-5905/ Fax: (304) 845-0023/ mail@newvrindaban.com
Mulberry, Tennessee (Murari-sevaka) — 532 Murari Ln., 37359 (mail: P.O. Box 108, Lynchburg, TN 37352)/ Tel. (931) 227-6156/ Tel. & fax: (931) 759-6888/ murari_sevaka@yahoo.com
Port Royal, Pennsylvania (Gita Nagari) — 534 Gita Nagari Rd., 17082/ Tel. (717) 527-4101/ kaulinidasi@hotmail.com
Sandy Ridge, North Carolina — Prabhupada Village, 1283 Prabhupada Rd., 27046/ Tel. (336) 593-9888/ madanmohanmohini@yahoo.com

ADDITIONAL RESTAURANTS

Hato Rey, Puerto Rico — Tamal Krishna's Veggie Garden, 131 Eleanor Roosevelt, 00918/ Tel. (787) 754-6959/ Fax: (787) 756-7769/ tkveggiegarden@aol.com
Seattle, Washington — My Sweet Lord, 5521 University Way, 98105/ Tel. (425) 643-4664

UNITED KINGDOM AND IRELAND

Belfast, Northern Ireland — Brooklands, 140 Upper Dunmurray Ln., BT17 OHE/ Tel. +44 (028) 9062 0530
Birmingham, England — 84 Stanmore Rd., Edgbaston B16 9TB/ Tel. +44 (0121) 420 4999/ birmingham@iskcon.org.uk
Cardiff, Wales — The Soul Centre, 116 Cowbridge Rd., East Canton CF11 9DX/ Tel. +44 (02920) 390391/ the.soul.centre@pamho.net
Coventry, England — Kingfield Rd., Coventry (mail: 19 Gloucester St., Coventry CV1 3BZ)/ Tel. +44 (024) 7655 2822 or 5420/ haridas.kds@pamho.net
◆ **Dublin, Ireland —** 83 Middle Abbey St., Dublin 1/ Tel. +353 (01) 661 5095/ dublin@krishna.ie; Govinda's: info@govindas.ie
Leicester, England — 21 Thoresby St., North Evington, LE5 4GU/ Tel. +44 (0116) 276 2587/ pradyumna.jas@pamho.net
Lesmahagow, Scotland — Karuna Bhavan, Bankhouse Rd., Lesmahagow, Lanarkshire, ML11 0ES/ Tel. +44 (01555) 894790/ Fax: +44 (01555) 894526/ karunabhavan@aol.com
◆ **London, England (city) —** 10 Soho St., W1D 3DL/ Tel. +44 (020) 7437-3662; residential /pujaris, 7439-3606; shop, 7287-0269; Govinda's Restaurant, 7437-4928/ Fax: +44 (020) 7439-1127/ london@pamho.net
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London, England (south) — 42 Enmore Rd., South Norwood, SE25 5NG/ Tel. +44 (020) 8656 4296/ eternal_duty@hotmail.co.uk
London, England (Kings Cross) — 102 Caledonian Rd., Kings Cross, Islington, N1 9DN/ Tel. +44 (020) 7168 5732/ foodforalluk@aol.com
Manchester, England — 20 Mayfield Rd., Whalley Range, M16 8FT/ Tel. +44 (0161) 226-4416/ contact@iskconmanchester.com
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◆ **Swansea, Wales —** 8 Craddock St., SA1 3EN/ Tel. +44 (01792) 468469/ iskcon.swansea@pamho.net; restaurant: govin–das@hotmail.com

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Dublin, Ireland — Govinda's, 18 Merrion Row, Dublin 2/ Tel. +353 (01) 661 5095/ praghosa.sdg@pamho.net

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Intelligence and Spiritual Truth

I LIKE TO STAY somewhat informed about the theories of modern science, so a couple of years ago I read a book called *Einstein for Dummies.* It's one of a large collection of *For Dummies* books that can supposedly make anyone understand even the most difficult subjects. The problem is, I came away feeling like less than a dummy when I couldn't understand the book.

My experience made me wonder: Can *anyone* learn *anything* if it's taught clearly enough? My first thought was that the answer is yes: If the teacher breaks things down into easily digestible pieces and leads the student step by step, then the student should be able to learn anything. After further thought, though, I changed my mind. Not everyone has the same ability to grasp ideas. Some people are just smarter than others.

Riding that train of thought, I arrived at another question: Can everyone understand the *Bhagavad-gītā*? Here again I was inclined to say yes. An excellent teacher of an ordinary subject may not be able to reach every student, but how could the *perfect* teacher of the *Bhagavad-gītā*—God Himself—fail to get through to anyone?

Even a perfect teacher, however, will fail to reach the unwilling student, whether the subject is material or spiritual. Therefore, understanding Kṛṣṇa's lessons requires something from us. Kṛṣṇa freely gives His mercy in the form of His instructions, but we have to be willing to accept that mercy. Vaiṣṇava authorities say that spiritual awakening requires mercy (*kṛpā*) from five sources: Lord Kṛṣṇa, the scriptures, pure devotees, one's own guru, and oneself. To be merciful to oneself (*ātma-kṛpā*) means to take advantage of the other blessings offered to us. So to gain the mercy of the *Bhagavad-gītā,* we have to at least be willing to accept it. We do that by accepting Kṛṣṇa as the authority on the subject He's speaking about and believing what He has to say.

Accepting Kṛṣṇa's authority implies following His guidance. He presents both philosophy and practice. He reveals the Truth, and He asks things of us. His ultimate request, repeated throughout the *Bhagavad-gītā,* is to develop love for Him. And love, or *bhakti,* is the key to understanding His teachings: "To those who are constantly devoted to serving Me with love, I give the understanding by which they can come to Me." (10.10)

Another instruction of Lord Kṛṣṇa's related to understanding His teachings is that one must serve and inquire from a guru who knows the truth and is a pure devotee of the Lord. A guru is one whose knowledge has matured into realization, one who not only knows about Kṛṣṇa, but knows Kṛṣṇa.

We begin with an intellectual grasp of Kṛṣṇa's teachings. By following the guidance of a genuine guru, we come to experience them as spiritual truth. To put it another way, *buddhi-yoga*, the yoga of intelligence, culminates in *bhakti-yoga,* the yoga of pure love for God.

Without dismissing everything I've just said, there's another point I should make: Awakening to spiritual truth need not involve the intelligence at all. Spiritual sound can reach the soul directly, bypassing the subtle coverings of mind, intelligence, and false ego. One can realize Kṛṣṇa—and thus everything else—just by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. Still, chanting must be done purely, and studying the *Bhagavad-gītā* helps us develop the purity we need. —*Nāgarāja Dāsa*

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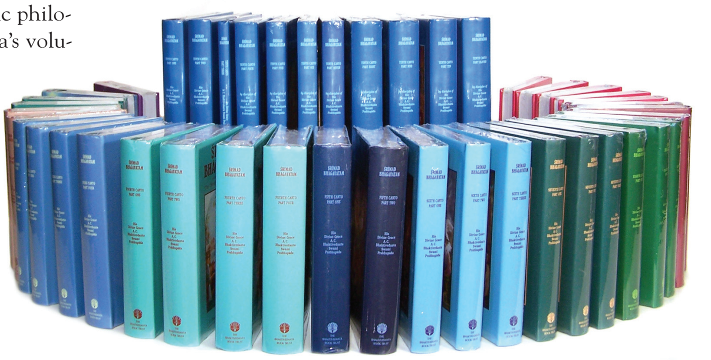

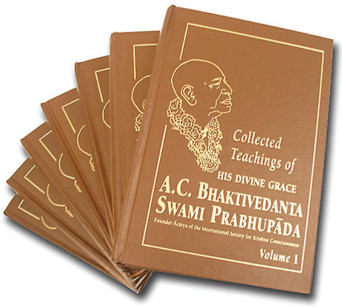
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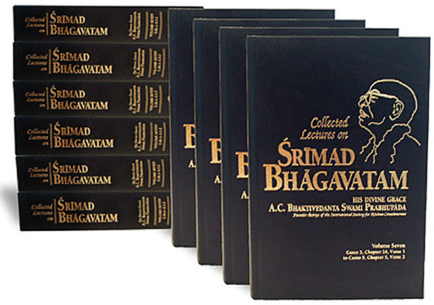
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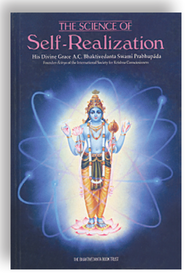
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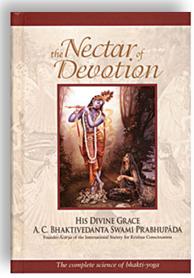
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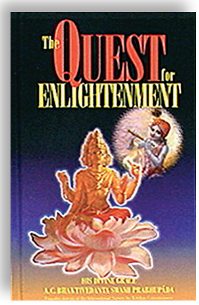
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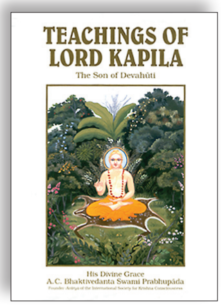
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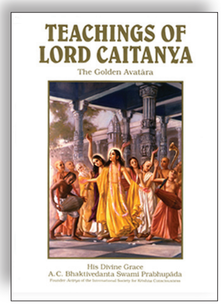
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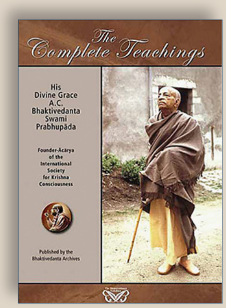
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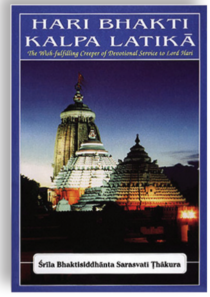
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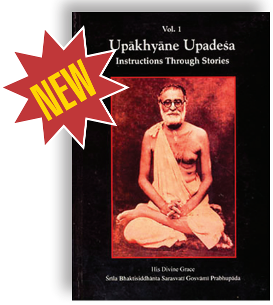
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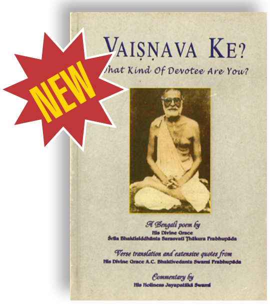
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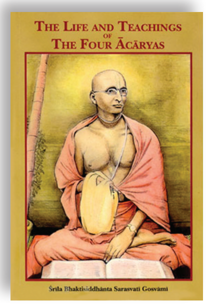
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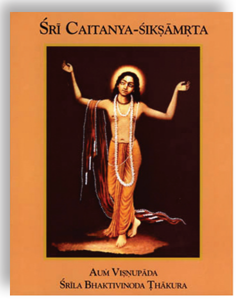
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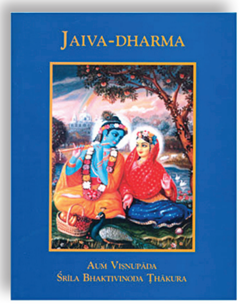
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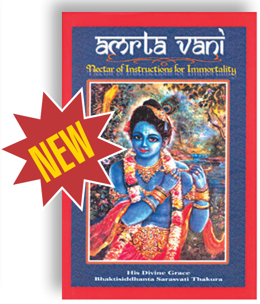
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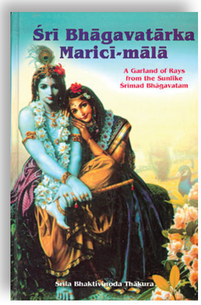
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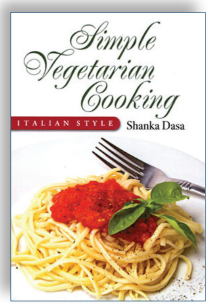
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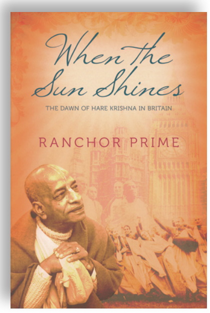
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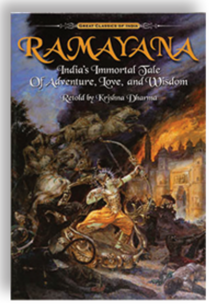
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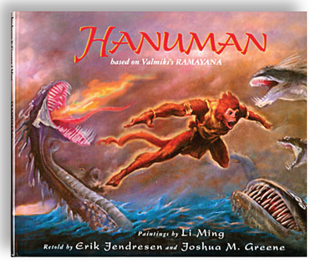
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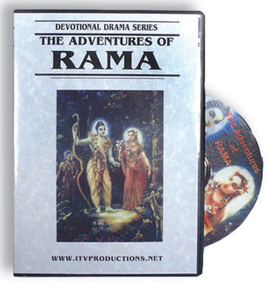
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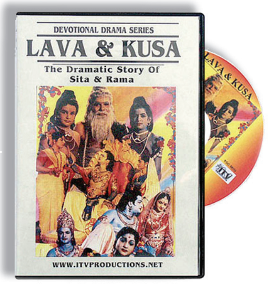
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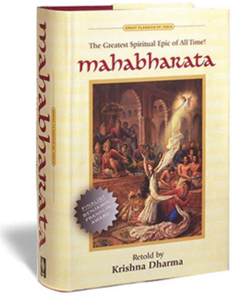

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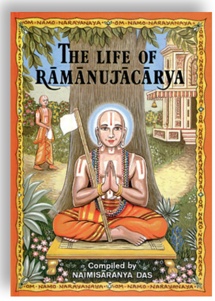

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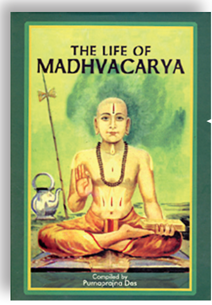

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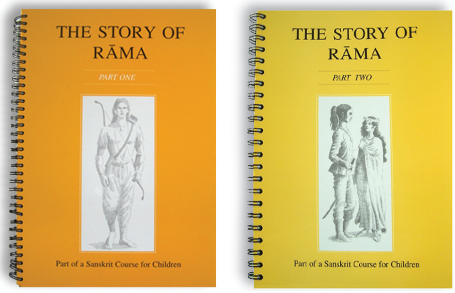

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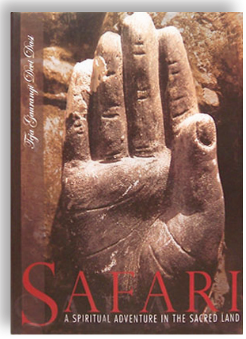

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His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupāda
Nārada-bhakti-sūtra 4, Purport

When an intelligent person engages constantly in worshiping Me through loving devotional service as described by Me, his heart becomes firmly situated in Me. Thus all material desires within the heart are destroyed.

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.20.29

Because a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa is desireless, he is peaceful. Fruitive workers desire material enjoyment, *jñānīs* desire liberation, and yogis desire material opulence; therefore they are all lusty and cannot be peaceful.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu
Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 19.149

For a person devoid of devotional service, birth in a great family or nation, knowledge of revealed scripture, performance of austerities and penance, and chanting of Vedic mantras are all like ornaments on a dead body. Such ornaments simply serve the concocted pleasures of the general populace.

Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya 3.12

Do not stay in illusion; go to the eternal reality. Do not stay in darkness; go to the light. Do not keep taking material bodies; become immortal!

Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad 1.3.28

One who engages in the transcendental service of the Lord in body, mind, and word is to be considered liberated in all conditions of material existence.

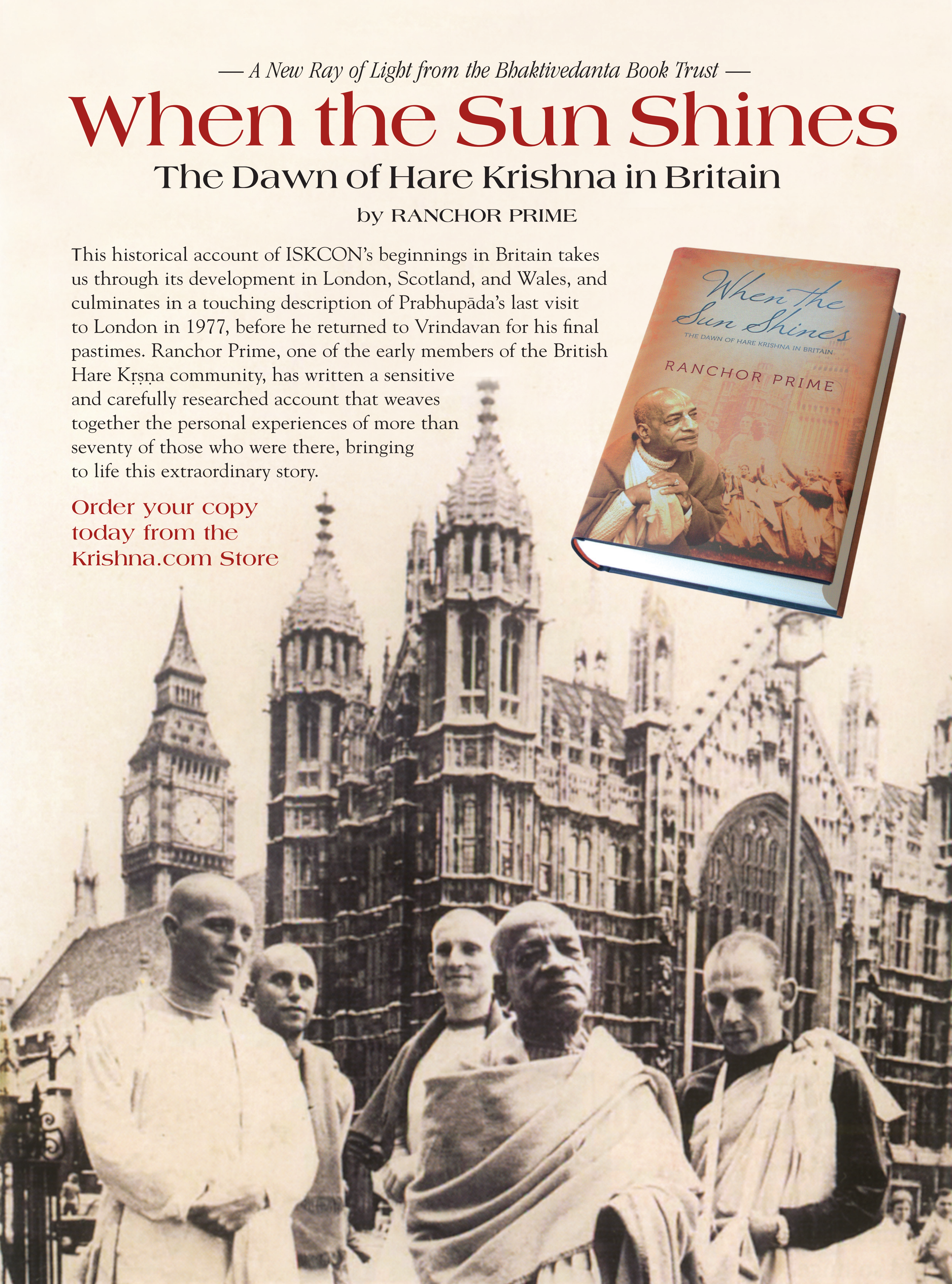
Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī
Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.2.187

When a living entity is conditioned by material nature, he is exactly like a person haunted by a ghost.

Jagadānanda Paṇḍita
Prema Vivarta 1

Without the unconditional mercy of the Lord's most beloved friends, a devotee's loving service can never succeed or bear fruit.

Śrī Hanumān
Bṛhad-Bhāgavatāmṛta 1.4.88



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